The Commonweal

A Weekly Review of Literature, The Arts and Public Affairs

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THE POLICY OF CATHOLICISM

PROFESSOR REINHOLD NIEBUHR is of course quite correct in his view, as stated in the *Nation* for January 30, that the Vatican is taking an "intransigent line in the disturbed affairs of the contemporary world." But we think that he goes completely wrong in his notion of what that "intransigent line" really is, and in his opinion that because of the nature of the Vatican's policy "Catholicism is becoming more and more an unqualified ally of Fascism." According to Professor Niebuhr, "Catholicism is traditionally rooted in feudalism." Fascism he defines as the "effort to press the forms of feudalism upon a technical civilization, a procedure which results in consequences even worse than those of feudalism." Therefore, he argues, the intransigent policy of Catholicism is determined by "its connection as a civilization with feudalism." Necessarily, therefore, he concludes, Catholicism is allied with Fascism. Its feudal tradition "sometimes gives Catholicism," says Professor Niebuhr, "a certain degree of impartial perspective with regard to capitalism," but where there is "a dying feudalism, whether in Spain or in Latin America," it appears, "the instincts of Catholicism to preserve itself as a social system overpower any possible moral scruples which may inhere in Catholicism as a religion and to which the more spiritual monastics (sic) may give occasional voice."

Yet, after stressing so strongly what he believes to be the determination of Catholic policy by its innate connection with feudalism, so that it is bound, in his opinion, to remain closely allied with the modern revival of feudalism which is Fascism, Professor Niebuhr goes on to say that Catholic policy also "is determined by the irreligion of radicalism as much as by the feudalism of Catholicism." But the "pure spirits within Catholicism who long for a better world and seek a higher justice," are frustrated, it seems, by "the hierarchy,"

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and—oh, of course!—by the Jesuits. "Lay Catholicism," by which Professor Niebuhr means "certain liberal political movements," such as the German Center party, or the Italian movement led by the priest, Don Sturzo, has been subjected to the "more perfect hierarchical control over all Catholics" established by "Catholic Action." And that control has resulted in "the unqualified alliance" of Catholicism with Fascism.

It does not seem to occur to Professor Niebuhr that it is not the irreligion of radicalism but the religion of Catholicism that really determines the policy of the Vatican. If he should turn to the Italian priest, Don Sturzo, whom he so highly regards, he might receive some useful enlightenment as to the real nature of the principles which determine the policy of the Vatican in regard to Fascism, and Communism, and "irreligious radicalism." In the January number of the *Dublin Review,* Don Sturzo deals with that subject. Professor Niebuhr, whose deep sincerity is well known to Catholic readers, would be well advised to ponder Don Sturzo's essay before committing himself to the superficial and potentially mischievous view of the Catholic Church in its relations with Fascism set forth in his article in the *Nation.*

For Don Sturzo, the Italian priest, whose work for the people of Italy was destroyed by Mussolini, and who is now an exile from Fascism, sees the Vatican today as primarily the liberated center of a purely spiritual power. He says: "The detachment of the Vatican, first from the Papal States (originally 'St. Peter's Patrimony'), then from Rome itself (an increasingly populous and exacting city become the capital of a great kingdom), must, in the design of Providence, mark the beginning of a new era, in which the support of wealth and power to the Papacy is reduced to a minimum, its territory, once a reality, has become symbolic, its earthly kingdom purely juridical. At the same time, the spiritual power, from the definition of papal infallibility onward, has increased in intensity and extension, both in the consciousness of the whole world and in the mystical reality of the visible Church."

The Church conditioned, and finally so, by feudalism! And, therefore, necessarily linked to feudalism's modern counterpart, Fascism! What a curiously limited view for so learned a man as Professor Niebuhr to take! Of course, the policies and methods of the Church were affected to some extent by feudalism; but before feudalism arose, the Church was at work, and when feudalism disappeared the Church remained, unchanged, essentially, and essentially unchangeable. The theological criterion of the temporal policy of the Papacy, as defined at the Vatican Council, is quoted by Don Sturzo. "In order that the Roman Pontiff should duly fulfil the office of primacy divinely attributed to him, he required the supports suited to the condition and necessity of the times." The forms of moral, feudal and political dominion possessed by the Popes in times past were simply "the supports suited to the conditions and necessities of the times." The Holy Roman Empire arose, and fell. The medieval Papacy flourished, and decayed. Mohammedanism from without, and many virulent heresies from within, and the upgrowth of the nationalistic spirit, aided by schism, overthrew united Christendom. Nevertheless, the Papacy remained, and in the Counter-Revolution, seated again in Rome, after the Avignon exile had done its worst, it flourished once more. "In a divided Europe," says Don Sturzo, "it rendered visible a moral and potential center of the Christian world." It was successful in resisting the threatened disintegration of Catholicism itself into the Gallicanism, the Regalism, the Febronianism, the Episcopalianism, of many countries of Europe. Then the exterior fabric of the Church rested upon the Roman Papal States. These, too, disappeared—yet still the Papacy remained to carry on its intransigent policy: the policy of maintaining its divine mission of preaching and teaching the religion of Jesus Christ. That policy is not allied with Fascism, it is not allied with any secular absolutism; nor can it be, for it serves God alone instead of man, and bows down to no idols made by man. The true source, and the strongest support, of human liberties, and social justice, is Christianity. And the divinely appointed, and divinely guided, director of that policy is the Pope.

Week by Week

WHILE the nation listened to news from areas desolated by floods, all other domestic problems seemed relatively insignificant. It was apparent that no previous calamity has exacted so heavy a toll, and none could predict the ultimate sum-total of damage and disease. Throughout the country, churches, organizations and individuals responded to the call for help. Meanwhile Europe, too, listened to a long-awaited message—the speech of Adolf Hitler on the fourth anniversary of his rise to power. It had been predicted that the German dictator would say something with an immediate bearing on the future of Europe. Would he accept one of the several olive branches recently extended? Of would he brusquely announce that until Germany got what it wanted there could be no peace? Those who took it for granted that, at the very least, Hitler would outline some kind of a proposal were as disappointed as those who seriously asked the above questions. It is hard for an Anglo-Saxon mind to realize that the "new

The Trend of Events

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statesmanship" regards all such matters as of secondary importance. Economic well-being is necessary to it, of course; but what is defined as "well-being" may differ considerably from estimates in foreign lands. The dictator is concerned with only one fixed quantity—a view of life, to be inculcated and defended at all costs. Whether his name be Trotsky, or Hitler, or Mussolini, his object is to preach a social religion. Naturally one such religion may be less objectionable than another. But all are dogmatic creeds, to dissent openly from which means ostracism.

THE ESPECIAL note of Hitler is his insistence upon the sacredness of the German soul. "Insults" to it are tantamount to blasphemies, and so the fifth year of Nazi rule began auspiciously with sundry denunciations of "lies" told by foreigners. The war guilt clause in the Treaty of Versailles appeared side by side with "honorable British cosmopolitans" who had protested against the fact that "a criminal subject of Moscow" was held in a concentration camp. Because a Nobel prize had been awarded Carl von Ossietsky, Germans were forbidden to accept any Nobel prizes in the future. Possibly, however, the most impressive aspects of Hitler's speech were those which tried to make an international argument for the validity of National-Socialism. It runs like this: the Moscow "International" is attempting to undermine all countries as it has already undermined Spain; Germany's destiny is to be the militarized obstacle to these attempts and therefore the swastika must make relentless war on Jewry, which has fomented the Moscow "International." We say these things are impressive because they officially end all the hokum that Hitler's war on Semitism was caused by an oversupply of Jewish doctors and lawyers. They would have been even more noteworthy had Der Fuehrer admitted that Jewry was "behind" other things, too—for example, the historic Christian faith, for which the German soul is busily fashioning a substitute.

KNOWLEDGE of what has really happened at the trials which have enabled Stalin to get rid of most persons adjudged obstacles in his path would be worth a great deal. Can one really believe that Trotsky and his friends conspired with Russia and Japan to foment revolution? And if they did not, how can it be possible that not a single one of the accused, despite torture and the rest of it, managed to issue the kind of denial that made Dimitrov famous at the Reichstag fire trial? Not a few are saying that Radek and the rest will not be executed at all—that the whole process has been a maneuver by Stalin to alter the drift of Russian Communism by compelling his chief foes to heap odium upon their heads. Russia is so vast and silent that the simple disappearance of such men into obscruity is not wholly impossible. Indeed, it is barely conceivable that the accused may be cooperating, as part of a plan to make Russia more acceptable to western democracies as a diplomatic partner. Yet, having weighed all these surmisals, one still finds its relatively easier to believe that the news coming out of Moscow must be taken at its face value—that Trotsky actually did try to regain his power and that the imperturbable Stalin struck back. It is true that the picture of contemporary Russia which then emerges is still dark, vague and threatening. But one sees there, at least, just the ancient, brutal tyranny of the Orient, which has outlasted many civilizations. The curious fact that Stalin "tried" his enemies while Hitler merely assassinated them is important only in that it shows the emphasis laid by the one upon the forms of democracy, to which the other was indifferent.

Russia a Keeper of Secrets

FROM the *Catholic Transcript*, which Monsignor Duggan edits with commendable verve, we cull the following sentence concerning Archbishop Hughes: "When ill-informed and intrusive laymen were claiming the right to govern the Catholic Church of the United States, John Hughes took up the cause . . . and reduced the usurpers to silence." The sentence is in part correct. Some of the laymen were "ill-informed and intrusive," though concerning them the old motto of diction about the dead may be in order. But even in the worst days of trusteeism, they obviously were not trying to "govern the Catholic Church." They merely wanted rather more control over the finances of their parishes than had been assigned to trustees in Europe. The age was one when in the Old World ecclesiastical finances were largely under the control of princes; and doubtless newly acquired democratic fervor ran away with Erastus Brooks and others. Yet, from the present point of view, it seems doubtful that the solution arrived at by Archbishop Hughes was perfect. There is round about us a manifest understanding of the need for wider lay participation in active ecclesiastical life. But the obstacles are many and serious. The money question in particular is often a distressing barrier to effective parish work. Half of the hard and distasteful work now wished upon pastors might, one thinks, have been avoided if the policy adopted during the fifties of the last century had been less arbitrary. Of course it is difficult to propose a remedy now, when traditions and convention alike have been so firmly established. But perhaps Monsignor Duggan could, if he set about it, make some notable contribution to the debate about a matter the importance of which appears to have been

"Intrusive Laymen"

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sensed in other portions of the editorial page on which the quotation made above appeared.

The Uses of Uselessness

ELSEWHERE in this department we pay deserved tribute to the high non-utilitarianism of the president of Chicago University in the field of educational ideas. But it is fair to say that the principle of non-utility may also have a liberating effect on the human spirit if applied in other fields and by other devices also. There are certain clubs and associations whose triumphant vindication it is that they have no practical value whatsoever. Walking clubs that do not walk, fishing clubs that never fish—these serve a need that, though it may be obscure, is very real. And in the same category may be placed those clubs which G. K. Chesterton delighted to describe: the Club of Queer Trades, for instance, which was based upon no bond but a single eccentric fact. If newspaper accounts are to be relied on, there is now another candidate for membership in this group of non-practical associations: the Society of the Erie Canal, which has just been organized to keep alive the memory of the old waterway between Buffalo and Albany which modern progress has killed. The membership is rigidly limited to (we quote) "old-time canal men or those who, as boys, played, swam, fished, skated or stole boat rides" on the ancient canal. Moreover, there is elaboration of some of these entrance requirements: for instance, the fishers must be able to establish that their catch weighed at least two pounds, and that they did not eat it; to have done so would prove, in the opinion of the organizers, that the candidate lacked the intelligence requisite for membership in so honorable an association. Officers are to be elected—chief engineer, lock tender, tow-path inspector, mule-driver—and there are to be dinners at some old canal tavern "if one can be found," as the wistful addendum runs. All this is so much in the right spirit that the Canal Society deserves wide moral support, even from those doomed forever to remain outside.

Dr. Hutchins Speaks

THE UTILITARIAN, "progressive" trend may triumph in modern education; but if it does, it will not be for the lack of at least one powerful voice raised against it, on behalf of the living traditionalist education of the past, the education which the Church brought into being. Dr. Robert Maynard Hutchins, speaking before the Association of New York Teachers of English, voiced once more those deep beliefs in the permanent value of liberal learning which make even the truncated newspaper reports of his words stand out almost like a different style of type. Reminding the teachers of English that they are the "custodians of what is left of tradition in education," the president of Chicago University pleaded with them to apply that heritage fruitfully both to themselves and to their pupils, "to the end that the virtues, moral, intellectual and theological, shall not disappear altogether from our country." He pointed out that the progressive disregard by the present system of the classics and the liberal arts is having one indisputable result: "to deprive the student of the last vestiges of his tools" and to leave him "helpless against his environment." Blame for the situation partly attaches also to bad teaching of the traditionalist elements—teaching that makes them "dry, dusty, mechanical, remote." This, coupled with the powerful push toward the vocationalist and the so-called "progressive" leads to "abandonment of our tradition and the books and disciplines we know"; which means, in the end, destruction of true and living originality in educated thought. For the right traditionalism does not mean "recovering the past" like "a corpse"; "in the order of education, tradition precedes invention. . . . The mastery of tradition is necessary to genuine and intelligent progress." The whole speech should be read by those interested in sane and vital thinking. It should be saluted, in particular, by Catholic educators, for its service to their own embattled educational ideals.

A Plain Catastrophe

THE FLOOD is an enormous catastrophe whose remarkable dimensions become clearer to everyone as more definitive death rolls are published, more adequate estimates of damage made, as Red Cross quotas rise, and especially as we take in photographs and newsreels of the devastation. It would be callous indeed not to sympathize with the friends and families of the drowned and with the sick and those economically ruined, and not to give our quota toward Red Cross rehabilitation. But the flood catastrophe is not first of all a moral tragedy. It is not a trial to the conscience and nerves as are the many manufactured debacles that share the front pages. Although the floods have causes we can perhaps largely prevent by using the land as it should be used and although we have been guiltily heedless in exploiting the earth, still the accusation is indirect and our responsibility not clearly known. Among tragedies, the flood is almost a relief. It produces unchallengable heroism; it unites people in a certainly good effort. The army and the National Guard are universally welcomed as ministers of peace and safety. There is no caviling with flood relief expenses. One caught in the flood knows exactly what he needs and nobody disputes him. Here the enemy is no man and no creed. How very simple it would be if there were only rain and rough weather.

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FASCIST—COMMUNIST DILEMMA

By WILFRID PARSONS

Which shall it be—Communism or Fascism? Father Parsons believes that in Europe a "rapid crystallization" is taking place, and that nations are actually confronted with the necessity for making a choice. Perhaps something of the same sort may occur here. At any rate, American Catholics must, he thinks, take heed lest they be maneuvered into a position of being for Fascism just because they are opposed to Communism. Father Parsons's article will be followed by another next week.—The Editors.

IN THIS whole discussion about Communism and Fascism there lies a very serious problem for Catholics which I think has not yet been fully explored. Moreover, behind the various solutions offered lurks a grave danger. Catholics in the past have not been immune from mistakes concerning common policies to be pursued, as witness the nineteenth-century history of Italy, Spain and France, for instance; and experience has shown that the mistakes that are made occur in the very dawn of the issue. Later, when choices have been made and sides chosen, it is often too late to do anything but make a selection of the lesser evil. Then the Church finds itself unwillingly on the side of men whose policies it cannot altogether approve and yet whose help it must invoke.

It seems to me that we are at the very beginning of such a choice of policies here in the United States and that it would be worth while to examine the situation and see what we are free to do before it is too late to do anything but take what we have to take. Thus we can, perhaps, choose our own battle-site and even our own weapons. THE COMMONWEAL, in commenting on this situation, has recently (January 1) quoted some words of mine delivered in New York late in December, and I welcome the opportunity to amplify them in the same sense and to draw some conclusions.

In reality, there are two problems that face us: what I may call the world problem and the national problem. They are related, of course, but they have very important points of difference. It may be too late to do anything about the world problem, but we still have time to formulate a plan and to unite our forces on the problem as it affects the country.

In Europe a very rapid crystallization of the situation has been taking place; it is fast becoming a choice between defending Fascism or Communism. The only reason I see why the armed clash has not already come is because England has not yet made up her mind; she is still hesitating because she likes neither side of the dilemma before her. To destroy Germany and Italy is to dissolve the only physical barrier against the onward sweep of Communism; to go with those two countries is to strengthen the enemies of democracy, to which England still gives lip-service. But it is only this hesitation which is keeping the peace. That is why propagandists like Pertinax from France and Lord Marley from England were recently here trying to persuade us to reassure England of our help if she plumps for France and what is involved in the Franco-Soviet alliance. Their story is that this is the way we will save democracy.

Now Marxists have a neat way of cataloguing nations according to their different historical levels: that is, according to the degree by which they approach the Marxist State. Obviously, Russia is on the highest level, the next-to-the-last step before complete Socialism. Spain is, or was, the next highest, where Communists had the deciding voice in the course of a government, which was at least in name still democratic. France would come next, where there is no Communist control, but where a strong Communist bloc in the Chamber is indispensable to the actual government of Léon Blum, a Socialist. England would come next, where an always potential Labor government would at least be friendly to Russian Sovietism. That would leave the United States last. The level we are on is that where an attempt must be made to render the people sympathetic to the aims of (1) Communism in Russia; and (2) Communism in general as a world movement. It must be admitted that we are fast approaching that level. Thus the Communist movement is dynamic, not static.

The agency of this forward movement is, of course, the Third International, which had its latest, or seventh, World Congress in Moscow from July 25 to August 21, 1935. At this congress an idea that approached genius was broached by Comrade Dimitrov, a Bulgarian whose name became famous when he was tried for the Reichstag fire, and later made Secretary General of the Executive Committee of the Communist International. In his speech, the policy was launched of bringing about a Popular Front wherever conditions allowed it, or of preaching the Popular Front idea where things had not progressed as far as the political field. The direct objectives to be attacked, that would most appeal to the non-communistic proletariat, were selected as Fascism and war. On the political field, the Socialists and all liberal parties as far as possible to the Right

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were to be invited to join in an electoral campaign under a common banner and with candidates chosen so as not to compete against each other in any one district, and so form a Popular Front government. Said Dimitrov:

"We Communists will support such a government with all the means at our disposal, to the extent in which it really leads the struggle against the enemies of the people, and *allows freedom of action to the workers' class and the Communist party*. . . . But we will tell the masses openly that: 'This government cannot bring about a final solution. It is not in a position to overthrow the rule of the exploiting class, and therefore cannot definitely remove the danger of a Fascist counter-revolution. It is therefore unavoidable that one should arm for the Socialist revolution. Only Soviet rule will bring about this final solution.' " (Translated from *Pravda,* no. 215, August 6, 1935.)

The new plan worked with startling success in Spain. In the elections of February 16, 1936, the Popular Front polled only 4,356,559 out of 9,408,513 total votes; but due to the form of proportional representation adopted, it secured almost two-thirds of the seats in the Chamber. Inside of three months the democratic wing of the Front under Azaña had all but succumbed to the extreme Leftist groups and practically abdicated power to them. It was then that the revolt took place, on the legitimate ground that the government had betrayed the electorate.

In France the electoral success of the Popular Front was also complete. At the expense of the Radical Socialists, a bourgeois party in spite of the name but a part of the Front, the Communists enlarged their representation in the Chamber from twelve to seventy-two seats, and a Socialist became Premier. The Communists did not enter the government, but were necessary to its parliamentary majority, and conditionally friendly, as Dimitrov had ordered.

A writer in *L'Europe Nouvelle* brilliantly compares the Popular Front to the typically capitalist device of a holding company. With a very small investment of votes the Communists are able to control the group that itself controls the country. They enforce this position in France by claiming to represent all workers, and for the last few weeks have been debating the issues of the country in their famous Sunday-afternoon mass meetings in the open air. The guided decisions of these meetings are meant to be the policies of the government, and, to a great extent, except on Spanish intervention, they are. In another sense, it is the old story of the Trojan Horse—which is not my comparison, but, with the incredible naïveté of your genuine Bolshevist, was made by Dimitrov himself in the speech at the Seventh World Congress!

Now all this cannot be understood without an understanding of the Marxist theory of revolution. This is very simply expressed. A revolutionary point is reached when the central government is so flouted with impunity, by strikes, riots, burnings, street battles, etc., that go unsuppressed and unpunished, that it loses all its moral authority. When that takes place, it needs only some strong hand to reach out and push it over, with a minimum of bloodshed. The Fascist revolution under Facta was for them a typical example; so also, of course, was Lenin's under Kerensky. But see how much easier it becomes to bring about that revolutionary point when the Communists, through the Popular Front, are a part of the government. In Spain, through the burning of churches and the murder of priests which Azaña did not dare to stop or punish because he needed the Leftists to keep him in power, his régime fell so rapidly in esteem, on Right and Left, that it was merely a question of who got there first to overturn it. It is amusing to hear the Communists blame the Rightists for having revolted; it was only a question of hours before they would have risen themselves. In fact, in Barcelona and Madrid the uprising seems to have been practically simultaneous.

In France, of course, the situation is not so advanced, but it is of the same nature, with some differences, due to France's key position in international affairs. Everything possible is being done by the Communists to discredit Blum's government, just as Dimitrov had promised they would do. In particular, the sit-down strikes are ideal for the purpose. If Blum takes action against them, the workers are aroused to fury; if he does not, the moral authority of his government is by so much heavily weakened in the country at large.

But another startling transformation has taken place in France. Only a year ago, the Communists were pacifists. War was linked with Fascism in their hatreds. Now they are the war party in France; Germany and Italy are the enemies; the Spanish Civil War is the pretext. They keep up an unremitting agitation against Blum for not intervening in it; and of course they know that it means war if he does. At the back of this is the Franco-Soviet alliance, by which Russia and France are bound to go to war if either is attacked by Germany. It was this latter factor that finally so alarmed Belgium that it denounced its treaty with France and resumed its position as a neutral. Belgium, seeing that the Communists were driving France inevitably into war, refused to be a party to it as long as France is allied with Communism.

Now this outline of the international imbroglio is necessarily only a sketchy one; it would require pages to trace out its complications. But mention of it is necessary before we come to the Popular Front in the United States. For here that device

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to help Communism has taken a very characteristic form, and it is necessary to study it, too.

The slogan of the Popular Front is: ally with Communism against Fascism to save democracy. In Europe this means France and England in alliance with Russia against Italy and Germany to destroy the menace to democratic institutions. To make this go down with us here it was first necessary to depict Russia in the new light of a democratic country. So all the genuine Communists everywhere had to swallow all they had formerly said against democracy and loyally preach the "new line": "Russia is the only democratic country in the world; her new Constitution shows it"—though it is not yet explained how a one-party country can be that. But see, for instance, the embarrassed attempts of John Strachey to put this across in his "The Theory and Practise of Socialism." The "new line" is now the stock in trade. Stalin himself inaugurated it. The very party platform of the Communists in our last election was a splendid statement of pure democracy, with almost no Socialism in it. The Socialist platform was far more radical. The Communists were depicted as the inheritors, the only legitimate, of our own American Revolution!

So that is where the Popular Front stands here, on our "historical level." Communism is to be identified with democracy, here and especially in Europe. See the propaganda about Spain. So, by implication, anyone who is against Communism or for Franco's "rebels" is an enemy of democracy. Moreover, Communism is rapidly usurping the place of being the only friend of the workers. Ergo, if you are against Communism, you are no friend of the poor. Up to a few weeks ago, the same was true of peace; only the Communists were sincerely desirous of avoiding war. Now all that is changed. But the device is sufficiently clear to be recognized whenever it occurs. There is a whole series of such conclusions.

Now here is the dilemma it leaves to us Catholics and to everybody who is opposed to Communism as a false philosophy and a materialistic substitute for religion. The maneuver is to try to bring it about that for those who are opposed to Communism there is nowhere to go but to Fascism. Take your choice. But if you go to Fascism you are no friend of democracy and a traitor to American institutions. And the maneuver is proceeding so fast that its progress can be noted from week to week. The danger to Catholics is far greater; for we are the most conspicuous in our opposition to Communism. We must break the dilemma, before it is too late. If we do not, we are lost.

THOUGHTS ON FRANCIS THOMPSON

By GEORGE N. SHUSTER

THE ESSENCE of what Francis Thompson really had to say is very simple, despite the complexity of the diction. He had found out, from reading and experience, that paganism cannot return. This discovery is of dual importance: it enables us to see the grooves in which Thompson's thought was moving, and it was remarkably valuable at a moment when dissatisfaction with civilization was leading many to turn for solace to the ancient myths. Our poet understood and appreciated paganism, and his verse is unintelligible apart from it. One may even be tempted to hold that the world which Christianity assimilated was more attractive to him than the world which Christianity itself "created," though of course his intellect was entirely on the side of the Master. And after he had ceased writing, the question was in order: "Why wish paganism to return?" Thompson had evoked from theology a crowd of substitute beauties the superiority of which to Greek or oriental originals it would be almost impossible to deny. Do you like the noble threnodies of Homer and Sophocles? Then explore the deeps which are opened to the gaze by magnificent Christian poems to the Sun. Where in the ancients is love of nature heightened into the spiritual frenzy of "Sister Songs" or the "Corymbus for Autumn"? And finally in these poems Plato so truly becomes Augustine and Plotinus that the path to Academe momentarily offers little hope of joy.

The method employed is curiously and convincingly Gothic. Mr. Megroz has explored what he terms the "Asiatic" background of much Thompsonian imagery, and his findings are interesting and valuable. Yet there is no attitude one need look for in Asia which the medieval cathedrals do not express. For their makers, too, art is a religious bacchanale. Useless forever is the attempt to interpret the Gothic mood as a simple, straightforward statement of fundamental intellectual and artistic principles. If Monsieur Mâle is correct and the minsters were something like stone illustrations of encyclopedias, it becomes important to know precisely what was in those encyclopedias. Mathematical rules, clear-cut dogmas, eternal queries of the saints? Some of these, yes, but far more—legends of a hundred sorts, symbolistic speculation not yet ruined by (or redeemed from) the Gnostics, and riotous embroi-

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dery of the meaning of life in lavishly patterned guesses. It is curious (as Mr. Megroz has noted) that Thompson's mysticism (see "Love in Dian's Lap") is not that of Saint John of the Cross, but of the fourteenth-century English and perhaps of Saint Hildegarde and Eckhart. It is dominated by belief rather than by vision.

Belief, then, seems to be the passionate positive concern of Thompson. Naturally this was not the reluctance to grow up which characterizes Peter Pan nor the yearning after intellectual solidity which marks every move of Newman. It was rather a vitalized blend of the two. That Thompson was an exceedingly well-read man nobody has ever been tempted to doubt, but perhaps the especial quality of his reading has not yet been sufficiently noticed. He read for the quite unconsciously entertained purpose of stimulating creation. And creation in turn is belief rather than make-belief. Addressing one who has prayed for him in "Orison-Tryst," Thompson says:

> Methought, upon the live coals of my love
> Those distillations of rich memory cast
> To feed the fumes of prayer.

Yet there is in his work a manifest absence of "arguments." When the prose essays attempt to make them, in the spirit of aiding a good cause, they are not very good. I am afraid that "Paganism Old and New" has never converted anybody, and that the Shelley essay is rather too much of a good thing. Essentially Thompson makes just one plea for the Catholic faith. Take it as faith and see what faith can do!

From this point of view "The Hound of Heaven," correctly thought to be the center of Thompson's poetic universe, derives new meaning. This meaning is also a critique of the age, to which this poet adopted a totally different attitude than did Patmore. He is, as it were (and in virtue of his belief), a "missionary poet." Now one who turns to "The Hound of Heaven" will rightly be impressed first of all with what there is in it of spiritual autobiography. This is all the more evident since the poem was written to accompany "Sister Songs" and so to make a kind of sequence. Since the references to his own life in the "Songs" are explicit, it is necessary to assume that the poet was giving in "The Hound of Heaven" an interpretation of his own spiritual experience. Yet all is not said when one has noted the strain of personal confession. He wrote for his time and about his time, in the hope that he might be for it the "poet of the return to God"—that his belief might prove beneficently contagious. Mr. Albert Cook has noted that "a careful examination of the poem will show that in his own individual experiences there recorded, Thompson suffered, speculated and solved with his times."

The "times" were, to be sure, read out of the poets. The entire ode is based upon them, follows them, tracks them to their lairs. In all probability the title itself is taken from Shelley's "Prometheus Unbound," the "winged hound" of which it transformed by Thompson's belief. The theme of the pursuit is almost visibly borrowed from Shelley's "Alastor" and "Epipsychidion," the second of which affords this among other startling parallels:

> And as a man with mighty loss dismayed
> I would have followed, though the grave between
> Yawned like a gulf whose specters are unseen;
> When a voice said: "O Thou of hearts the weakest,
> The phantom is beside thee whom thou seekest."
> Then I—"Where?" the world's echo answered "Where?"
> And in that silence, and in my despair,
> I questioned every tongueless wind that flew
> Over my tower of mourning, if it knew
> Whither 't was fled, this soul out of my soul.

In Shelley the friendly Thompson beheld the soul of the nineteenth century—its most splendid principle of aspiration; and it was this he tried to save *first of all,* being on the whole, I think, despite the dark passages in one or the other essay, less worried about the faith of the masses. Shelley was fleeing from the horror of his age down various labyrinths of belief—progress through science, communion with nature, friendship and love, idealism. But there could be no real or transfiguring escape through these. The end was necessarily that outlined in the poems to Jane Williams —"Faileth dream the dreamer and lute the lutanist." Therefore, why not try the belief which has proved so infinitely beautiful and satisfying to another poet? Why not join Thompson in fealty to Christ? This message could, to be sure, no longer have any practical value for poor Shelley. But why might it not touch the heart of England's latest singer—the man or boy still caught in the toils of Romanticism?

It is, of course, strange (as has often been noted) that Thompson continued to live, despite his genius, in the universe of the Romantics. This has latterly redounded to his discredit with some moderns, who find him too verbose, fulsome and careless about margins of thought. But though such criticism has a relative value, in that it helps newer writers to abrogate practises no longer useful to them, it seems to me unjust from any objective point of view. The whole cycle of Romantic poetry was, perhaps, dedicated to the theme of belief. The culture bequeathed to the nineteenth century was both disillusioned and full of talk about "the greatest good of the greatest number." No doubt the English mood of the year 1798 was something like what might be that of a patient whose doctor told him that a certain

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medicine would positively cure him although he was sure to die of his disease. The bourgeois had momentarily been hoisted by the petard of his own revolution. What was needed by the artist-soul was a new belief—but not too new a belief. The great attraction which the German philosophers had for Coleridge was caused by the help they afforded toward repossessing convictions traditional to the British mind. Keats's "Greece" was, as has often been noted, the antiquity of the Elizabethan poets, and Wordsworth progressed almost visibly from Samuel Daniel to the Jacobean divines. As for poor Shelley, the attempt was the well-nigh hopeless one of reviving the splendid credence in science and progress which had momentarily shriveled up in the Revolution but which he and others could surely coax back into life.

Thompson resolutely set his belief against all these, confident that it would offer more to the imagination and the heart than the rest. His appeal is always to these faculties, and not to the intellect—a pecularity with which it is modish to find fault, but which seen in the perspective of history is not very glaringly unwise. Yet I do feel that he has less to say to the immediately present age than his friends generally suppose. There is too much of eclecticism in his doctrine and manner of preaching to bring out the "bare straight line" of his thinking with sufficient poignancy, just as there are too many variations in a Gothic treatment of a structural theme to emphasize the stark facts in which the currently modern architectural sense delights. But Thompson remains a great poet with whom, it seems to me, none similar now living can compare.

LOOKING SOUTH

By RICHARD PATTEE

ON THE occasion of the presentation of his magnificent library to the Catholic University of America, Dr. Manuel de Oliveira Lima made reference to his fond hope that the collection might serve as the commencement and stimulation of more intimate cultural contacts between the Catholics of the United States and of Hispánic America. The distinguished Brazilian diplomat and bibliophile was animated perhaps by the belief that the common tie of religion might aid materially in bridging the space which divides the English-speaking and thinking portions of America from those where Spanish and Portuguese are employed. In large measure this dream has gone unrealized and in a very real sense there exists in the United States no agency under Catholic inspiration and auspices for the intensification of spiritual and intellectual contacts with the richly endowed nations to the south.

In spite of the overwhelming Catholic tradition which prevails in the Hispanic American world, Protestant foundations and institutions have exercised a greater intellectual influence and have displayed a keener appreciation of the virtues of Hispanic American thought than have Catholic. Rare indeed is the volume published in the United States from the Catholic pen dealing with the questions which agitate Hispanic America. Remarkable is the appearance of a work such as that of Father Edwin Ryan which studies the rôle and problem of the Church in South and Central America. The excellent reception accorded this little book is testimony of the alarming dearth of similar publications in North American Catholic circles. It may be added that Protestants have set up a monthly review in Spanish for the presentation in the language most widely understood in South and Central America of the best in modern thought. And let it be recalled that Protestantism exercises practically no influence in the spiritual life of the peoples of Spanish and Portuguese America.

The inevitable reflection is, that American Catholic activity has failed to take cognizance of a field rich in potentialities and closely akin in mentality and outlook. It has long since become axiomatic that the Catholic scholar approaches the Middle Ages with a greater insight and is more attuned to perceive appreciatively the attitude of mind of that epoch than the non-Catholic. The common denominator of dogmatic belief and the vast number of things which the Catholic already knows because of his religion forms a link of no small importance in the realization of the particular task at hand. The same holds true even to a greater degree with respect to Hispanic America. Even such a phenomenon as anti-clericalism, which from time to time has swept the continent to the south, is more perceptible in its causes and consequences to the Catholic than to those of other beliefs or none at all.

The panorama of Hispanic America as part and parcel of the great Catholic tradition is mightily impressive. Discovery, conquest, colonization, evangelization—all have responded to the same urge and motive. The religious force was never lacking down through the centuries of Spanish and Portuguese domination in this hemisphere. And what can be said of the nineteenth century and the beginnings of the present? Under the republican régime, this tradition has remained

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fundamentally unbroken. There have been innumerable cases in which it has been shaken, suspended, paralyzed or even anathematized, but the Hispanic American republics remain essentially and preponderantly Catholic—in almost every manifestation of their spiritual, artistic and intellectual life. Each republic offers unique examples of religious development and adjustment. The line of cleavage which was driven in the early nineteenth century when independence came, affected the religious progress of every one of the newly established states. Henceforth each was to follow a course of development distinctive one from the other. This process of reorientation, modification and in some cases transformation cannot fail to strike a response of interest and concern in the American Catholic.

The storm and stress through which Mexico is passing is all too well known to Catholics in the United States. Wise and judicious studies from Catholic pens have revealed the tragedy of Mexico and the woeful persecution of which the Church is victim. The knowledge of this reality is enormously important as is the cause of the Mexican Catholics who are braving the wrath of a powerful State-directed system, in order to prevent the uprooting of the sentiment of religion in the mass of the traditionally Catholic population. In Colombia, recent events have made manifest a fundamental struggle between Church and State which has taken the form of a constitutional change, with numerous modifications in the privileges and rights of the ecclesiastical order. Colombian history in the past has been distinguished by decades of ceaseless effort to impose an anti-clerical régime in the republic. No more interesting country is to be found in which the fluctuations of clericalism and anti-clericalism may be contemplated. To the south lies Ecuador, the only American republic to institute at one time a system of government based exclusively on Catholic principles. Of intense interest and possible instruction is the experiment of fifteen years realized by Gabriel Garcia Moreno to make effective for an entire nation an ideal of Catholic Action. The experiment failed and the reasons for that failure are of inestimable importance to investigator and casual citizen alike. In Brazil, during the course of the past century, there was introduced in succession every doctrine which gained even a passing popularity in Europe. Positivism became so deep-rooted as to leave traces to this day. Brazilian Catholicism has passed through stages quite distinct from those of the sister republics. Paraguay was ruled for long decades by the Society of Jesus, and the influence is yet to be seen in the diligence and endurance of the Indian masses. One could list characteristics indefinitely, all significant, and all of engrossing importance for the American Catholic.

Catholic institutions of higher learning have played and continue to play a rôle of first importance in the American republics. In Lima, the newly organized *Universidad Católica del Perú* is a promising rival to the ancient San Marcos, long since laicized. In Bogotá, there is the splendid *Universidad Javeriana* of high repute, under the direction of the Society of Jesus. In Chile is to be found the unequaled *Universidad Católica,* ranking with the best institutions of that progressive republic. Secondary and primary establishments are countless in all of the twenty states. American Catholics might well become conscious of this other Catholic world which is so remote in point of contact and so close in spirit.

The dream of Dr. Oliveira Lima that Catholic opinion in both continents should complement each other has never been realized; has not, in fact, even been undertaken. The spiritual wealth of Hispanic America is untouched and in the present state of affairs untouchable for the Catholic residing in the north. The forms and possibilities of intellectual cooperation of an effective nature are numerous. The existence of a committee or body to guide the searcher for knowledge or information on Hispanic America would serve a function of the highest importance. The output of books both popular and scholarly is an unknown quantity unless the agency exists for making known what is pertinent in the production of both continents. The significance of personal contact cannot, of course, be questioned. The utility of seminars and organized visits, not merely for the scenic satisfaction but for a more profound penetration, can hardly be overestimated. The exchange of intellectuals is equally vital, with the added advantage of reaching a greater audience. The availability of means for the close collaboration between thinking Catholics in both North and South America would serve the incalculably beneficent purpose of revealing the past glories and present hopes of co-religionists in this hemisphere whose mutual heritage is a positive bond, the strengthening of which could not fail to produce fruits of increased international good-will.

The general field of Hispanic American history, civilization, art and letters have all received an attention in Catholic universities and cultural circles so scant as to be hardly perceptible. A "Good Neighbor" policy, initiated modestly perhaps, but enthusiastically, to promote precisely this relationship inspired in a common faith would at the same time provide our Hispanic American co-religionists with a knowledge of what American Catholicism is doing, which is totally unknown, and informing the North American Catholic of the difficulties, apprehensions and controversies which have arisen in the communities to the south. The results would be well worth the effort required.

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MERCY RIDES THE CLOUDS

By JULIUS W. HAUN

THE AIR was hot and close—muggy, reported one who experienced it—at Rochester, Minnesota, on the afternoon of August 21, 1883. The weather wiseacres scanned the sky apprehensively, for the little town had tasted the fury of the wind just one month earlier in that summer. But no one could foresee in that moment what mingled havoc and blessing would ride into town upon the clouds at set of sun.

Rochester in that day was just one of the typical growing towns amid the fertile plowlands of southern Minnesota. Its fewer than 5,000 inhabitants, of the usual stocks composing the newer towns of the expanding agricultural Midwest—Yankees from eastern families of largely British derivation, and immigrants from Ireland, Germany and Norway—were busied with the varied activities of town life in this shopping and service center for the rich farms of the low hill country at the headwaters of the Mississippi's smaller tributaries. There were several grain elevators at the sidings of the Winona and St. Peter Railway, the single-track ribbon of steel tying the region to the eastern market by way of the Northwestern's twelve-year-old drawbridge over the Mississippi at Winona, the rail system which would later absorb this local unit. There was the two-stall engine house and repair shop of the railway, and *"the* depot." There were the "Harvester Works," employing some 75 men in fashioning the agricultural implements for the earlier stages of farm mechanization. There was the flour-mill where the Zumbro River was harnessed for power in the shallow valley in which the town lay. And there were the false-front frame and brick "stores," tin-roofed, catering to the needs of those who were rapidly converting the recently wooded acres into a part of the great bread-basket of the nation. Planked sidewalks confined the hoof-churned dirt of the streets, new homes were springing up to house merchant and worker, the town grew consciously with one eye on its more metropolitan neighbor, the lumber-industry city of Winona, then some four or five times its size.

The town went to its supper, still mopping its collective brow, while the clouds banked up into a dark mass in the southwestern sky, and the thunder boomed ominously in the distance. Shortly before seven the massed clouds began to move with the wind behind them. Out of the black mass a great column dropped to earth, with wisps of grey scudding before the charge. Into the narrow valley the cloud dipped, with the town in its path; across the town it swept, from southwest to northeast, and in another few minutes it was roaring away over the farmlands to the east, carrying the shocked and stacked grain of the new harvest, barns, dwellings, with it into annihilation.

But behind it in Rochester lay the worst of the wreckage. The whole northern quarter of the town was in ruin—"a bad-looking sight," reports a journalistic novice of the hour. The elevators sprawled over the trackage. The depot had lost its roof. The Harvester Works were a wreck. The flour-mill had been ripped asunder, its last flour-laden freight car tossed into the millrace. The tin roofs of the store-buildings lay in great rolls in the streets. Homes, more than 200 of them, were but tangled masses of splintered lumber and sodden household effects; another 200 were in need of repairs. And out of this wreckage came the story of human suffering and death.

But here commences the history of mercy cloud-borne. The bodies of the dead, twenty in all, must be gathered from the ruins for burial—a sad task for the little town. But a problem more difficult of solution was that of care for the injured, some hundreds of them, sixty of whom, severely injured and homeless, must be brought into one place for proper care. For Rochester had no hospital, nor was there an adequate hospital within a hundred miles. A few physician-surgeons there were, including the elderly Dr. W. W. Mayo, then sixty-five years of age, but active then and later, until past his ninetieth year; there were no nurses. But the emergency was met. "A hospital," says the laconic contemporary recorder, "has been improvised in Library Hall, where all of the homeless wounded are lying on cots and receiving every possible attention. Surgeons were assigned to duty at Library Hall, and the ladies came forward nobly to minister to the wounded."

Among these ladies under the direction of Dr. Mayo were four members of the religious community of the Sisters of St. Francis, a teaching group who five years earlier had established in Rochester the academy and convent of Our Lady of Lourdes, now become the motherhouse of the order.

With this mustering of medical and nursing abilities the crisis was passed, and the town struggled back into its rôle of servant to the needs of a rich agricultural region. But a special need had been revealed and an idea implanted, soon to fructify. Rochester needed a hospital; the Sisters of St. Francis, under their far-seeing superior, Mother Mary Alfred, recognized the call as come to them; Dr. Mayo—his elder son, William, al-

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ready a doctor at his side; his younger son, Charles, nearing his medical degree—was obviously the possible nucleus of a worthy medical and surgical staff.

The suggestion for a hospital was made to Dr. Mayo by Mother Alfred within a few weeks of the great storm. But it was not until the summer of 1887, four years after the wrecking of the town by tornado, that the Sisters were able to undertake actual steps toward building, with the encouragement of ecclesiastical authority, and the pledge of the three Doctors Mayo to become the initial medical staff. Though possessing but the slenderest of means, but rich in an abundant trust upon Divine Providence, the Sisters acquired a hospital site at that threshold of the town over which the tornado had come. Building commenced in the following year; and at the end of September, 1889, the first patient was received into the little forty-bed St. Mary's Hospital—an operative case, with the two young Doctors Mayo as surgeons, and their seventy-year-old father as anesthetist, six Sisters of St. Francis being the entire nursing staff, one of these, Sister Mary Joseph, destined to be, through almost half a century the guiding spirit of the hospital.

This was the beginning, amid hardships and privations, in the little kerosene-lamp-lighted hospital. But the hospital's growth was no less than phenomenal. And the staff, surgical and nursing, grew with the hospital, not only in numbers, but also in abilities and techniques. The hospital's records reveal a successful issue of 98.3 percent among the 655 surgical operations of the first four years, nearly all of them under the skilled hands of the young Doctors Mayo, who never tired, however, of generously insisting that their success was to be ascribed to the devoted care given to their patients by the nursing Sisters.

At approximately five-year periods the hospital's needs outgrew its facilities, and addition followed addition. The mere statistics of total patients treated at St. Mary's Hospital give a picture of this fairy story of modern medicine in a near-frontier town. In 1890: 301; 1895: 640; 1900: 1,220; 1905: 2,747; 1910: 5,457; 1915: 7,368; 1920: 7,435; 1925: 8,396; 1930, 10,597.

Nor is this the whole story. Out of the work begun at St. Mary's sprang other units for the diagnosis and care of human ills. The Mayo Clinic for diagnosis came into being, with its ever-expanding staff and its ultimate skyscraper proportions. Specialization increased, and with it came a circle of new hospitals for specialized treatment. Patients arrived in ever-increasing numbers from the far corners of the earth. And the small farm-service town became a modern city of twenty-odd thousands of residents, a perfect example of "the world beating a pathway to one's door."

But the city of Rochester is essentially a one-industry community, and that industry is the care of the sick. The city continues, of course, to be the distributing center for the agricultural region in which it is situated. But the people on its streets are rather the thousands of "transients" who flow through the city's hospitals, hotels and boarding homes, the ailing and the companions of the ailing, and the hundreds of doctors, nurses, medical technicians and service helpers who compose the bulk of the resident population. Rochester, from having been another small melting-pot where the hardwood lands of many-streamed Minnesota began to break into the treeless plains of the West, has become a cross-section of those afflicted with bodily ills, not only of the nation, but of lands beyond the seas, and a demonstration-plot for the marshaling of human energies to their cure.

All of this might have happened without "the cyclone." But it was that storm of the late summer of 1883 which demonstrated the need for a hospital and gave impulse to the idea which came to flower and fruit by the uniting of the charity and the prayerful trust of the Sisters of St. Francis with the surgical skill and genius for organization of the Mayos.

Thus again, "Who can search out His ways?"

Defense

Prying shoots of earliest day
Stole in upon my wall,
Festooning thickest where I lay
And was not seen at all.

My lashes flickered under light
That clambered over me,
And yet its tendrils did not quite
Discover me.

I stayed thus lost in night until
I slipped from human semblance,
And a white voice upon a hill
Became my one resemblance. . . .

Too timid to step forth and run
Where buttercups burned madly,
I sent pale cries toward the sun
Then wavered earthward sadly.

All this, of course, was sheer defense,
Because I still was night-bound:
I longed to keep sleep's sweet, intense
Distance from sight and sound!

I wished to stretch my body long
And light as tissue-paper,
While slowly through my mind a throng
Of moths flew round a single taper!

MARION CANBY.

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THE EMPTY FIELD

By VINCENT ENGELS

ONE WINDY day in the autumn two years ago, when the ceiling was infinity, but the lower air was hazy because our neighbors were burning their fallen leaves, I went out to walk with a friend of mine, and we began by taking a short cut through the empty fields. We did not get very far. I guessed that my friend was no longer following behind me, and turned to see him looking absent-mindedly at a seed pod, hook-shaped and walnut-colored, which he turned over in his hands and slid into his pocket, where the cleaner would eventually find it. A few steps along, he left the path to look closely at the silver-chequered bark of an old dogwood, counted the veins in a blade of pampas grass, and there were other things, nuts and nettles, that he seemed to be worrying about for the first time.

This happened to be the same man who on a February morning in the streets of New York jerked me to a stop, at the same time gazing into the branches of a little tree as though the ghost of his grandfather was shining there. All I could see was a pair of city sparrows, and asked, "What's eating you?" He said, "It's a sign of spring. The birds are north again."

It follows that I should not have tried to lead such a man through such a field. He had beginner's luck, too. The path came out of the high grass into a tangle of small trees. We ducked our heads to get through. Something moved in the brush ahead of us; we stopped and craned our necks to see a big owl under the umbrella top of a young locust tree, not twelve feet away. He stared at us out of obsidian eyes, and we stood still, staring back. He fluffed his feathers like a hen, and flew away, lurching heavily as he left the bough. He flew out over the houses in the direction of the farmlands, while we waited for him to come back. In a few minutes his shadow sailed along the hedge and we saw him land in the walnut tree not very far away. There he stayed looking hard in our direction, but then deciding I suppose that he was imagining things, turned his head as if to sleep, only to jerk awake again and fly off to another branch a few feet away in order to put more leaves between himself and the blurred forms, shadows or flashes of light that he saw down there.

Now the first object of this discourse is to explain why the owl should be there, in a field surrounded by houses, and not very far away from factories, department stores and traffic cops, all of which things the Barred Owl wisely fears, detests and avoids. Hawks, the record shows, are not so intelligent. It was only a few years ago that a hawk took up his claim in the city of Chicago, where fat pigeons are abundant and easy to catch, and the ignorant and rapacious people of that city, instead of being pleased and edified, agreed that they could not sacrifice one pigeon a day from among their slow-flying multitudes upon the cloud-built and wind-swept altar of his noble ruthlessness, and in their ignorant manner wrote so many letters to their newspapers about it that the police were soon forced to take two days off from their proper work in order to hunt and kill the hawk. The same thing, I believe, has happened in other great cities infested by pigeons, but the bird of prey has never been the Barred Owl.

An empty field in the suburbs is as far as he will go. He will rarely go so far. He did in this case because our empty field, as my friend saw that afternoon, is a very extraordinary field. It is full of rabbits, quail, mice, squirrels, rats and small birds. The owl was there because the game was there, and the game because the field offers food, water and cover, and because it lies within the village boundaries, where the discharge of firearms is prohibited by law.

The field is a wedge-shaped piece of seven acres, and it lies on the side of a hill. From the top of this hill you get a partial view of the village and a complete view of the field, with the houses below it, although nobody could say where the field begins and the lawns end down there. The line is straggly and only a high wall could hold it straight. Nothing else can stop a field from encroaching upon gardens. So we have weeds and honeysuckle coming up in the borders of the yards, and sometimes well inside them, while sumac crams the alleyways and unused ends of streets more densely every year.

Years ago, the field was part of a large farm, and grew corn, wheat and tobacco instead of sumac. Then in the late eighteen-nineties a street-car line was built out from the city, and people came here to live. The farm was cut up into lots. Sewers were laid, houses built, streets cut and paved. At last all there was left of the old farm was this wedge-shaped piece of seven acres. Nobody knows why it was never built up. Nobody in our neighborhood even knows who owns it. Or cares. The city is crowding us closely now, and some of our neighbors are thinking of pushing along another five or ten miles out.

About the time that the field began to assume its present size and shape, an old Negro came to live there and to cultivate it. I say he was old only because the people who now remember him always speak of him as "the old darky." He built a house for himself near the upper end. It was a house, not a shack, because it had a foundation, the roots of which you can still expose if you know where to kick for them under the roots of briars. At one corner of the house he planted a weigelia bush. It is there still, a beautiful tree now with dense small foliage, about twelve feet high. Being so old, it does not flower except when it feels like it, that is, when the spring is so fine and propitious that even an old tree must blossom, something which has happened only once in the last five years. And separating the house from the garden he planted a privet hedge, which is now eighteen feet high, with the marks of its last pruning still evident in a bulging line five feet above the ground.

In the days when the Negro lived here, there were only four trees on the field. At the upper corner was a black walnut; near-by a persimmon. Not far from the house was a locust, and in the middle of the field a red cedar. I never saw the farm, but all this is easy to determine, the black walnut being about two feet through at the stump; the persimmon, a slow-growing tree, eight or nine inches;

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the locust, almost two feet; the red cedar, fourteen inches; and these are the only trees of such dimensions to be found. Crowding the red cedar is a dogwood, and this also may have been growing in the old days. The branches of the cedar have kept it from growing more than eight feet high, so at that height its top has spread out horizontally, in the semi-circle of a fan.

When the old Negro died, no one else came to cultivate the field, and nature took it over. Nature is a good farmer, but a slow one, and works as we all know by trial and error. During the first few years, the field could not have been much to look at, full of wild mustard, crab grass, ragweed and burdock. Then briary canes appeared in isolated patches, killing off the weeds beneath them, but giving shade and protection to the seedlings of slow-growing trees, oaks, elms and cherries, which as they became well established, in turn killed off the briars. Sumac grew heavily at the lower end of the field, and from one fence corner, which for convenience the old Negro had probably never plowed, honeysuckle spread to entangle bushes, saplings, fence posts and a broken wagon.

Before the trees and the honeysuckle had claimed the field completely, something else happened. Somebody in the neighborhood had made a planting of pampas grass, and a wind carried the seeds into the empty field. Next summer there were a few scattered clumps of this beautiful grass, with green blades as high as a tall man's head, and in the fall, crests of tawny bloom higher still. In another year there was a lot more of it, and then after several years, being stronger than crab grass and other weeds, and stronger than canes, it had filled every available inch of the field.

This alarmed some people in the village as the growth of other weeds, even of poison ivy, had not. They saw their garden beds and borders lost in a tide of grass, and they protested to the commissioner of streets and parkways which is our neighborhood's way of writing a letter to the *Times*. In this case it brought action. Tools were bought, men hired, and they mowed the grass and cut down the smaller trees, everything under an inch and a half in diameter, which is the biggest thing a man can fell with one blow of an axe.

When the field had been mowed, the whole neighborhood lost character. We had been living beside a piece of the wild prairie; now we saw an empty lot, with a few islanded stands of brush and trees. We looked out across this lot toward a street of houses that we had never clearly seen before, and they had looked better when we had known them only by an angle of the porch or thrust of roof seen through the mat of sumac and the crests of pampas grass.

The tracks of the mower were alternating stripes of dark green and light green: grass cut on the way up field showing a different grain and color from grass cut on the way down. Here and there were high stacks of brush and hay where the men had raked it. One day they set fire to it, and the ghost of the field went up in a dozen columns of blue grey smoke.

After that of course there were no quail and rabbits and you could walk anywhere about the field in your best Sunday clothes without fear of burrs or briars. Many people did, and through the week children wore hard paths in all directions on their way from school. There was some talk in the village council of turning the field into a playground, with swings, seesaw and a baseball diamond.

Next spring when it came time to play baseball, the brush was coming up again. Soon the field was spiny with creepers. There was a lot of honeysuckle and it bloomed better for having been cut. Young locusts jumped up from the torn stubs and stumps, and if you had to push through them you smelled the rank unpleasant odor of the sap of this wood, even more strongly than in the freshly cut adult tree. On damp days in April, essence of garlic was noticeable too.

By the middle of May, the pampas grass was already high, and the field looked much as it always had at this time of year, only now there was less brush and more grass than ever. One morning I heard the sudden yelp and Yi-Yi-Yi of our hedge and garden dog, and knew that the rabbits had come back. A few days later, a brood of quail marched out upon the lawn. We talked about trapping them again. Somebody remarked that somebody else had said there were more kinds of birds here than anywhere else in the land. The statement did not reflect the best opinions on the subject, and led inevitably to argument.

What it demonstrated was that the field had returned to its former importance in our lives. Not only ours. At first dusk that evening we saw a large bird sail in. It was already too dark to be sure of him, but later on we heard his cry and knew that the Barred Owl was hunting the field again.

Chiaroscuro

The field was dark, the field was still, no sunrise stained the sky.
I saw no road that stretched above the shadows strange and deep.
My mind was dark, my feeble will sought methods to deny
The hopes that goad, the wraiths of love, the thorns that wanderers reap.

It was a dream, and I awaked. I know a different form
Of living now. I see the sun, I hear the nightingale.
The far hills gleam, the heart that ached awaits no drought, no storm,
I raise my feet; new strength I've won; I will not tire nor fail.

Now I am drenched with light; I dare to wonder and to seek,
I touch the flowers, I hear the birds, I feel the hearts of men.
My hands are clenched, and I can bear the distance of the peak.
O shining hours! I heed the words of faith. I dream again!

HELENE MULLINS.

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WITH A PACK ON YOUR BACK

By JOHN E. GREEN

THE TROUBLE with most of us, who live in areas thickly populated with Catholics, is that we feel the mission of the Church is practically completed. Yet, I dare say that what observations I am about to make are also true in other areas throughout our country.

Within an hour of my home in Philadelphia, I can travel in every direction, and in each case will pass many sections and large areas where the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass is unknown to the populace. I mean by that, the fruits of the Holy Mass are as foreign and as unknown to those people as they were to those who originally dwelt here, the American Indians.

Anyone reading the book of the history of the early Church during the founding of the villages and towns in America, must admire the work of our early martyrs, the holy Martyrs of North America, Jogues, Brébeuf and the rest of those gallant gentlemen and priests, now happily saints of Holy Mother Church. The hardships which they endured and the difficulties they surmounted are almost unbelievable. They went out with large packings upon their backs and broke new territory through the woods, there to give the beneficent blessing of the holy Mass. Their packings could be described as both material and spiritual. They carried their food, raiment and sleeping equipment, plus their Mass kit. They walked for days through the worst kind of difficult tracking, through woods, except when they were fortunate enough to have as their destination a place situated on the water. Then, they paddled a canoe and lugged it over many miles of portage until they struck the next body of water.

All of this comes before me from a past reading of "The Jesuits of North America," by Francis Parkman. And this book, which was written about 1870, is recommended as a Catholic Book of the Month, every month in the year. The writer was a non-Catholic and accepted nothing in faith, but fact. He went to great length to check and double check and when he gives us the history of what these priests went through, it is fact and he marvels at it and cannot understand the motive. Remember that these priests were cultured gentlemen from Europe who went into the most revolting locations, amongst the most savage creatures that possibly could be imagined. They went among the savages who practised cannibalism, whose ferocity knew no bounds, and they went voluntarily and willingly.

Now, out here within an hour's ride of any large city, is an opportunity which might well be used for the spread of our faith. It may be a very impractical plan, but it seems to me that there is nothing to stop our priests from putting a pack on the back and taking a bus to some of these places. Certainly they will find hostility—but they will not find savagery. It seems to me that they will find at each location some Catholic family to house them, and some building which might be used for the Holy Sacrifice.

It does not seem unreasonable to say that they could well do this without any funds for a start, except that which might be necessary to take them to their first point of mission activity. The expense will be light and the experience wonderful and I daresay the number of converts will be more than one per priest, which is now the case, according to the official figures. It is even possible that a priest who is weighted down with financial difficulties and worried as to how he will meet next month's bills, will find healthful relaxation in such a plan as this.

Perhaps, after all, I am very foolish and have been daydreaming. It is possible that I made a mistake in reading that book, but somehow certain portions of it struck deeper into my spirit than others and they have many times given me occasion for thought. Often, when sitting in a crowded church, I think that someone made terrific sacrifices to provide the church for my convenience, and then I wonder if it has not been made too easy. When I think of the work of both priest and laymen, I wonder if we have not become entirely too soft, too inactive, to be called practical Catholics.

Yes, priest and laymen have become too soft, I am afraid, if we compare ourselves with those early Catholic actors. The motive is still there which made Brébeuf stumble along on his forty-mile trek, heavily laden, through the winter woods. He had not eaten for two days, and was pushing along over soft snow, sleeping at night wrapped up in his sweated clothing and several blankets, when he thought he would have to quit. It seemed so easy to stay there, with his bones and muscles aching, and fall into a sleep, which would be the first step, then freezing—and his work would be over. Weak with hunger, staggering along, carrying his Mass kit on his back to a group of filthy, dirty savages. What is the use? Suddenly, afar off, there appeared a luminous cross, striking indeed and quite a shock to him, no doubt. When he had gotten back to his fellow priests, he was asked, "And how large was the cross?" And he answered, "Large enough to crucify us all." And in the years which have followed, I do not think the Cross is any smaller.

Night Overwhelms a Citadel

(Dusk Pastoral for Manhattan)

Across ten miles of marsh, where shadows loom
Upon the mountains of the day's end; where,
Beyond the dunes of darkness, a bright spume
Of golden surf floods color to consume
The dusk while lantern tides rinse purple air—

The skyline towers, lifts its headlands higher
To glow in last reflection of the sun.
Each mountain flames in momentary fire,
Until on broken turret, shattered spire,
Gold melts to mist and ashen rivers run.

When dusk drifts down Manhattan to the pause
Of sudden darkness, slowly stars appear
On plinth of earth and firmament, the gauze
Of evanescence wanes, the night withdraws,
And each wan lamp becomes a wondrous sphere.

CARL JOHN BOSTELMANN.

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Seven Days' Survey

The Church.—The thirty-third International Eucharistic Congress opened at Manila, February 3, and Cardinal Dougherty of Philadelphia, papal legate and former bishop of two Philippine dioceses, delivered the salutation before a throng of 100,000. * * * Pius XI was permitted to return to many of his administrative duties and the secular press cited the Holy Father's plans for next May. * * * When the floods of the Ohio River struck Cincinnati, members of the Catholic Youth Organization in cooperation with other Catholic agencies removed over 500 poverty-stricken refugees from the submerged area. * * * Dom Nicolas Perier, former minister of the Swiss canton of Fribourg, who entered a monastery just as he was about to be named President of the Swiss Confederation, has just made his solemn profession at the Benedictine Abbey of La Pierre qui Vire, in Burgundy. * * * The Notre Dame Study Club of the Church of Notre Dame in New York will send a resolution to Holy Name Societies, study clubs and other parish groups in the Archdiocese of New York urging support of the anti-lynching bill to be introduced at this session of Congress. It attacked lynching as an enemy of American institutions, against law and order, the preservation of human rights and the fundamental Catholic principle of the sanctity of human life. * * * Receiving the Paris clergy last month, Cardinal Verdier of Paris declared, "The ancient order we have known has indeed disappeared. Let us not sulk before the future. . . . A profound change in the possession of the things of this world is in progress. How fortunes have tumbled! The number of the new poor has increased and each day reveals to us new secret miseries . . . the works, even the life of the clergy in its material resources must continue on a new basis. . . . We are bound to the truth but there are ways and ways of propagating it. Truth should never go without charity. . . . One must make known the doctrine of the Church, not only her social doctrine, but her philosophy, opposing truth to error in all domains without wounding or injuring. . . . Let us not be only conservators, especially of what ought to disappear." * * * *Orate Fratres* reports that the League of the Divine Office has at least 500 members, chiefly in Boston, New York, Minneapolis, Pittsburgh, St. Louis, St. Paul and Victoria, B. C. A similar organization of the laity is spreading in Austria under Dr. Pius Parsch.

The Nation.—As a result of the General Motors strike, the Secretary of Labor has asked for a new labor law. The National Labor Relations Act of 1935 has been of no assistance at all in the present controversy. Proceeding under a 1913 law which authorizes the Secretary to act as mediator "whenever, in the Secretary's judgment, the interests of industrial peace so require," Miss Perkins tried to arrange a meeting between the contestants. Mr. Sloan refused to attend. Now Miss Perkins wants a law empowering the Secretary to subpoena witnesses and documents in formal investigations of labor troubles. * * * Federal Housing Administrator Stewart McDonald reported to Congress on January 28 that the FHA in three years had insured loans totaling over $1,100,000,000. He stated that in 1936 about 270,000 non-farm dwellings were constructed, and he estimated that between 400,000 and 450,000 would be built this year. * * * The Ramspeck bill, putting all postmasters under civil service and providing for promotion within the service to postmasterships, passed the House after a sharp six-hour rebellion. It was a rather independent test of the administration's power to work through executive reorganization, one of the biggest items in the present legislative docket. * * * A four-cornered controversy on neutrality laws seemed imminent in Congress. Senators Nye, Clark, Bone and Vandenberg are sponsoring a hard-shelled mandatory "cash and carry" law, simply prohibiting the extension of credit or transportation facilities by Americans. Buyers would get title here on payment, and see to their own deliveries. There are also a Pittman bill and a McReynolds bill before Congress, permitting greater executive discretion. The administration is said to be working on a program based on a compromise of these and its own desires. In case of civil or international war abroad, there would be a mandatory embargo on arms. The President would have discretionary authority to govern other essential war supplies —such as oil—not necessarily placing an embargo, but insisting on the cash and carry principle. He would also have discretion over secondary features, such as travel regulations for nationals.

The Wide World.—The highest Soviet tribunal passed sentences on seventeen defendants after a trial which had heard confessions of extraordinary plots to overthrow Stalin with the aid of Germany and Japan. Four of them, including Karl Radek and Gregory Sokolnikov, received prison sentences, but the general impression seemed to be that they might be tried later on for other offenses. Reports that the death sentences had already been carried out were received on January 31. It was likewise intimated that Leon Trotsky would seek to visit the United States in order to present his view of the proceedings. * * * The Nazis celebrated the completion of four years in office by convening the Reichstag and featuring addresses by Adolf Hitler and General Goering. Most of what was said had to do with the situation inside Germany, and concrete references to foreign policy were few. But one gathered that Germany would refuse to enter into agreements involving Russia—which probably means that no "Eastern Locarno" is being considered as a bargain price for credits and trade agreements. Statements that Germany had any designs on Spanish territory or resources were refuted. Eagerness to arrive at an understanding with France was reiterated in a general way, but the refer-

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ences to M. Blum and Mr. Eden were not complimentary. As is customary, the Nazi revolution was glorified as having been bloodless, in comparison with other disturbances of a similar kind. * * * It was reported, though the authority for the statement was not given, that the leaders of the German Catholic hierarchy had advised Rome to abrogate the Concordat in view of a determined effort by Hitler to suppress all confessional schools. At Vatican City, however, it was declared that efforts would be made to "revise" the agreement. * * * The Spanish Civil War dragged on, with heavy fighting reported from the Madrid sector. But despite what appear to have been heavy and prolonged bombardments, no change in the general picture was discernible. Exceedingly stormy weather held up operations at sea and on land. In other countries the growing tide of refugees from Spain created a difficult problem. France witnessed the organization of relief committees for exiles on both sides. * * * General Ugaki failed to form a Cabinet in Japan, whereupon General Senjuro Hayashi, once Minister of War, was summoned by the Emperor. This move was taken to indicate that the army had won a slashing victory, and that the government would move in the direction of Fascism. Nevertheless, the first statements by General Hayashi were more conciliatory than had been expected. * * * French government speakers on the international situation made it evident that France was not prepared to accept "security treaties" which did not involve the whole of Europe. The inference could be drawn from M. Yvon Delbos's speech at Chauteauroux that some kind of certainty that Germany would not seek expansion to the East would have to precede serious discussion of trade and similar problems.

* * * *

General Motors Strike.—On February 3, the G. M. strike was in as serious a stage as it could be. The day before, the Circuit Court at Flint had issued a sweeping mandatory injunction in favor of the company, fixing a $15,000,000 penalty for violation. Among other things, the injunction commanded that all the union defendants "on and after 3 p. m. February 3, 1937, absolutely desist and refrain from continuing or being in, on, upon, or going upon the premises and plants aforesaid, of plaintiff. . . . absolutely desist and refrain from picketing the premises of the plaintiff. . . . absolutely desist and refrain from in any manner interfering with the non-striking employees of the plaintiff." The local sheriff was charged with service and enforcement of said injunction. There were 3,000 National Guardsmen in Flint, without whom the sheriff could hardly do his duty. What order these Guardsmen would receive was a question on the morning of February 3. The sit-downers telegraphed the Governor that: "We have decided to stay in the plant. . . . We fully expect that if a violent effort is made to oust us many of us will be killed." William S. Knudsen issued a statement saying, "General Motors welcomes the decision of the Circuit Court in Flint which upholds our position that the forceful occupation of our plants by the union is illegal. We expect that the union will now demonstrate that it is a responsible organization, willing to abide by the law and to respect the rights of others, by peacefully accepting the decision of the court. As soon as the plants have been evacuated and restored to our possession, we will commence negotiations with the union on the issues which it raised with us in its letter of January 4." John L. Lewis, on his way to Detroit, said: "Our attitude is as it has been—that a controversy exists and that a conference is indicated. Every moral and logical consideration indicates a conference between the contending parties. After all, that is the only way to settle a controversy, unless it is desirable to await the exhaustion of one of the contestants or until one adversary beats the other down. Common sense would indicate that the sane course to pursue would be for both parties to confer without conditions or stipulations." A conference was finally achieved, under the chairmanship of Governor Murphy.

Constitutional NRA?—President Roosevelt said in his message to Congress, "The statute of the NRA has been outlawed. The problems have not. They are still with us." He is reported to be considering a single statute which will obtain NRA objectives by defining interstate commerce instead of leaving that constitutional term for definition by the courts. This definition by Congress would permit the enactment of legislation on child labor, minimum wages and maximum working hours designed to bring about the necessary reemployment. Fair trade practises would be achieved through amendments to the original acts setting up the Federal Trade Commission, which would thereby be empowered to supervise the establishment and maintenance of these agreements within industries. Other plans proposed by congressional leaders include Senator O'Mahoney's proposal of a licensing act whereby each industry would be required to establish certain minimum wage and maximum hour standards with restrictions on child labor before being granted permission to engage in interstate commerce. Another plan would tax longer hours, lower wages, speed-ups, and the introduction of labor-saving devices for revenue to provide relief for those that are displaced by these methods of lowering production costs. Others would give business a free hand in dealing with labor conditions and fair trade practises by amending the anti-trust acts. President Roosevelt is reported as still opposed to a constitutional amendment to achieve these objectives. In the face of these rumors and considerable congressional activity Senator William E. Borah delivered an eloquent radio broadcast, February 1, calling upon Congress to abandon any attempt to curb the Supreme Court. He demanded that the issue between the legislative and judicial forces of the government be submitted to the people, that the new increase of congressional powers be frankly admitted and proposed in the form of an amendment to the Constitution. "To establish the precedent of making vital changes in our national charter without the authority of the people expressed in the manner pointed out by the Constitution may seem expedient for today but it may torment us on many a tomorrow. We may not always have in power those who use the powers of the government in the interests of the people."

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Non-Catholic Religious Activities. — Hundreds of churches in the United States, Canada, Great Britain and Scandinavia celebrated, February 5, the one hundredth anniversary of the birth of Dwight Lyman Ryther Moody, noted lay revivalist of the eighteen-seventies and eighteen-eighties. In 1874 and 1875, Mr. Moody and his co-worker, Ira D. Sankey, organist and chorister, addressed no less than 2,500,000 persons. * * * On February 17, more than 3,000,000 Methodists are expected to sit down to dinner together to celebrate the launching of the Million Unit Fellowship Movement of the Methodist Episcopal Church. A series of family-night dinners has been arranged in local churches throughout the land. * * * At the annual meeting of the National Lutheran Council, a report of the Committee on Social Trends on the Church and the Family, the Church and Communism, and Gambling was approved and will be transcribed in full for Lutheran pastors during the coming year. It stresses the need of adopting "effective means of combating Communism." According to the News Bulletin of the National Lutheran Council the report suggests as the best means, "social action, insistence upon real justice and upon all forms of substantial welfare. . . . In reference to injustice, racial hostility and brutality, military madness and class tyranny and other evils, Christians should not be so sluggish and indifferent as to give the impression that Communism is either *the* chief champion or *a* chief champion of economic and social justice and welfare and of international understanding and peace. The report does not favor the Church's initiation of programs or movements for social betterment but rather urges the instruction and inspiration of the individual Christian to lend his aid to all rightful action in that direction." * * * In his annual report to President James B. Conant, Dean Willard L. Sperry of the Harvard University Divinity School declares that the first fifty years of voluntary chapel at the university have proved to be a success. Average Sunday attendance is 600 today in comparison with 525 ten years ago and there is an average daily attendance of 61. The total attendance of 51,437 persons at 321 services at the Harvard Church is the largest annual attendance in recent years.

Attacks on Liberty.—What attacks if any are being made on fundamental American liberties? The average citizen, aware that things are moving in the general direction of improvement and stability (regardless of set-backs) is inclined to care very little about theoretical guesses that "if" such and such happens, such and such will be the result. Interesting in this connection was a recent poll of public sentiment on the strike in progress throughout the General Motors industry. Sometimes, however, men do wonder whether the ideals of Stalin, Trotsky or Hitler are making any progress. A point frequently singled out is the congressional investigation. Concerning this George E. Sokolsky writes in the New York *Herald Tribune:* "The greatest encroachments that are being made in our freedom today lie in the character and methods of congressional investigations. I do not mean that there should not be such investigations nor that they do not often serve a very useful purpose. What I do mean is that the investigators do not protect the investigated person according to the rules of evidence, according to the privacy of documents, according to the right to be tried by a jury and to be represented by counsel." Others have taken a somewhat different point of view. While deploring the lapses from strict justice which congressional procedure has sometimes involved of late, they maintain that progress could not be made were less stringent measures to be employed. That the query is of at least academic importance is proved by the considerable amount of comment now being written.

This Winter.—On February 2, Candlemas Day, the East experienced its first touch of winter. In the vicinity of New York there was no snow, but a fifty-mile wind whipped down from the West and that night the mercury sank toward the zero mark under a brilliant sky. The proverbial ground-hog saw his shadow and scampered chattering back to his hole, thereby indicating six more weeks of winter, and Jersey farmers were reported to have abandoned all thought of beginning spring plowing. The oyster is said to be a much more reliable animal and the New York *World-Telegram* claims that a certain Captain Jacobus Kwaak of West Sayville, Long Island, a trapper of Bluepoint oysters for nearly fifty years, reports that February, hereabouts, will turn a bit colder and that spring will actually make its bow around St. Patrick's Day. Captain Kwaak makes this prediction because the oysters are fairly close to the surface just now. In the meantime, youngsters of all ages are clamoring for ice and snow. The tortuous slopes in Central Park are brown and bare and shinny and coasting have been impossible in the environs of the city. After weeks of high-pressure salesmanship for skis, ski-boots, parkas, ski trousers and all sorts of fetching winter-sports costumes, enthusiasts have up to now been unable to embark on week-end ski trains for Northern trails. In fact, the only winter sports in these parts have transpired on artificial skating rinks and the borax Alps of New York department stores. Those who are champing at the bit for a bout with the great outdoors may be interested to know why. The New York *Times* cites the Weather Bureau to the effect that the winds from the warm South Atlantic area with its center at the Azores and fringes at Bermuda and Portugal and North Africa have been holding their own with the cold winds blown across from the Pacific Ocean north of Honolulu. Instead of giving way as usual in their battleground high above the area between Boston and the Rockies and returning east for reinforcements, the warm wet air from the South Atlantic has held its ground and poured down its floods of rain and slush. Such is the ordinary winter on the Sargasso Sea.

* * * *

Contraction and Expansion.—On January 30, the Federal Reserve Board ordered a 33 1/3 percent increase in reserve requirements, to be effective in full by May 1. At that time, reserve requirements on demand loans of banks in central reserve cities will be 26 percent of de-

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posits, in reserve cities, 20 percent, and for "country" banks, 14 percent. This action was taken legally "in order to prevent injurious credit expansion or contraction"—obviously at this time, the former. The action reduces the absolute amount of reserves usable as a basis of credit, and changes the ratio by which the remaining reserves can be expanded through the issuance of credit into bank deposits. Last July, when the Board first ordered an increase, the excess bank reserves totaled $3,300,000,000, which, at the then prevailing level of reserve requirements, was capable of supporting an expanion in bank credit of from $33,0000,000,000 to around $40,000,000,000. After May 1, member banks will have left about $500,000,000 of excess reserves, and with the new reserve requirements, their expansibility into credit will be between $2,500,000,000 and $3,000,000,000. Reserve requirements will have been doubled (as much as the law allows), and potential credit expansion reduced to one-eleventh. The increase in excess reserves has been piled up largely through the import of gold. Between the bank holiday of 1933 and December 24, 1936, $4,000,000,000 in gold entered the country. On the latter date, the Treasury undertook to become the exclusive purchaser and recipient of newly mined and imported gold, thus preventing it from adding to the country's banking reserves. After reducing the amount of credit banks can issue without regard to its policies and controls, the Federal Reserve Board expects to guide credit by open market operations in buying and selling government securities and by regulating the rediscount rate, with relative ease and flexibility. The amount of idle funds held by individual and institutional investors is believed by the Board great enough to assure continued low long term interest rates. This action of the Reserve Board, supported by bankers, was deplored by many who felt it would raise interest rates (on government as well as private loans), retard business expansion, and play into the hands of "money changers."

The Delta Farm.—The Delta Cooperative Farm at Hillhouse, Miss., founded only in March, 1936, has made public in several magazines its remarkably successful first year. The farm of 2,138 acres, with between 500 and 600 acres cultivated, is now held by five trustees: Reinhold Niebuhr, John Rust, Sherwood Eddy, William R. Amberson and Sam H. Franklin. Dr. Eddy writes that it is founded on four principles: "(1) Efficiency of production and economy of finance through the cooperative principle. (2) Participation in the building of a socialized economy of abundance in the midst of the present poverty. (3) The principle of interracial justice. Without raising the question of "social equality," the teaching of which is specifically forbidden by the laws of Mississippi, we endeavor to enable both races to cooperate and solve their mutual economic problems together. (4) Realistic religion as a social dynamic. We believe in the return of Christianity to its prophetic mission and its identification with the dispossessed and the poor with whom it began." End of the year figures show that the trustees hold a $30,000 farm fully paid for and free from debt. All the thirty families are members of the producers' and consumers' cooperatives. Profit from all commercial activities on the farm are divided among members in proportion to the amount and quality of work done. As a consumers' co-op, the settlers have a large common garden, a hog farm and poultry farm, the beginnings of a dairy, and a co-op store. Temporary houses have been provided, but permanent ones will be built by a building cooperative. The whole cooperative is governed by a democratically elected council of five, only three of whose members may be of one race. The trustees may overrule the council, but have not yet done so. The co-op members are now able to repay to the trustees $1,000 to amortize the land, and have been able to distribute in dividends among themselves $8,909, an average of $327.53 per family. The income of the average tenant farmer in Arkansas is only $212 per year per family. Delta members also received in certificates $122.29 for deferred payment for their nonproductive labor in the building of houses and clearing of land. And this first year, the farm got a late start and suffered an extreme drought.

Reciprocal Trade and England.—In January, the administration requested the extension of the Trade Agreements Act of 1934, soon expiring. This Act gives the President power to raise or lower existing duties by not more than 50 percent, but not to change the free list; and reciprocal agreements concluded under its power are not considered ordinary foreign treaties requiring endorsement by two-thirds of the Senate. Under the leadership of Secretary Hull, fifteen pacts have been concluded under the Act, important ones with Canada and France. Hearings were immediately held, during which administration officials strongly pressed for the extension. Outsiders expressed a certain amount of opposition, especially farm groups who feel that the Canadian treaty hurt agriculturalists, and also, to some extent, the Brazil treaty. Some witnesses moved to make the treaties subject to the two-thirds Senate vote; others wanted to change the "most favored nation" principle upon which these, as well as the country's whole treaty structure, are based, "since they extend the benefits of reciprocal tariff agreements to those who are not a direct party thereto, giving them the benefit and getting no equivalent in return." The week-end visit of Mr. Walter Runciman of the British Cabinet at the White House was looked upon as being most importantly an opening move to provide a reciprocal agreement with the country most important to us economically. Using a new technique, Mr. Runciman admitted talking about nearly everything to the President, but no one knew what they spoke most earnestly about. It was supposed that they spoke about British recovery and its means, the Ottawa-British Empire agreements, the problems of neutrality and war materials for England and the open door in colonies. Mr. Runciman said that the results of his visit were "60 percent." He told reporters that there were two points at which agreement was found: The general objectives of the two governments are the same. Both countries, if they can, want to bring about a greater degree of Anglo-American commerce.

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The Play

By GRENVILLE VERNON

Caponsacchi

IT IS not difficult to understand why "Caponsacchi," the play by Arthur Goodrich and Rose A. Palmer based on Browning's "The Ring and the Book," should have interested Richard Hageman as the libretto of an opera. It has color, it offers the opportunity for pageantry, and it possesses dramatic contrast. The appeal of the play had already been proved by Walter Hampden, and a composer would be perfectly justified in believing that that appeal might be extended to opera audiences. Mr. Hageman wisely chose one of the authors as his librettist and Mr. Goodrich proved his skill by cutting down the play to operatic proportions and yet keeping everything essential to the story. Of his success at least there can be no doubt, despite the fact that in cutting down the drama some of the psychological quality of the story must necessarily be sacrificed. But that is not the librettist's fault; it is the way of all opera. With all due respect to the theories of Richard Wagner, ideas are not the province of the lyric drama, but emotions and actions. In the operatic version of "The Ring and the Book" there is little Browning left, except the bones of the plot, though Mr. Goodrich has kept as much of the characterization as perhaps is possible, leaving to the composer the task of filling out that characterization by his music.

Richard Hageman is a skilful musician, moreover one who through long experience as an operatic conductor knows the need of the lyric stage. He knows how to write for the voice, his orchestration is facile and clear, his sense of musical declamation sure. He proves the possessor of all these things in "Caponsacchi." In short, his is no opera of a tyro, but is professional through and through. Furthermore he knows how to write graceful melodies, and melody is after all the basis of a successful opera. When, however, we ask is there anything personal in the opera, does Mr. Hageman write in an idiom of his own, the answer must be in the negative. The score of "Caponsacchi" is eclectic. In it there are strains of many composers and many styles, composers and styles which Mr. Hageman has not transmuted in the fire of his own imagination and made his own. In this he is but a man of his time. Since the death of Puccini and the drying up of Richard Strauss no composer of opera has given to the world any personal idiom. All are saying the old things over again, and the most we seem to be able to demand is that they say them gracefully. This at least Mr. Hageman has done.

The cast the Metropolitan provided is on the whole excellent. First honors go to Mario Chamlee for his Caponsacchi. Mr. Chamlee sang the music well, and with a clarity of enunciation that was remarkable, while giving a sincere and often moving impersonation. Lawrence Tibbett, though singing the music of Guido well enough, was not happy in his acting. The part is that of a sort of Iago, a spirit of evil, and Mr. Tibbett's restlessness and lack of poise missed the essential spirit of the man. Helen Jepson was fair to look upon as Pompilia and sang adequately, and Anna Kaskas was excellent as Margherita. The weakest part of the production was the ballet. To say the least, it did not distinguish itself. Mr. Hageman conducted with authority and spirit. (At the Metropolitan Opera House.)

Tide Rising

"TIDE RISING" is another play dealing with the conflict of capital and labor, but it deals with it in a novel manner—that is, novel to the New York stage. George Brewer, jr., who wrote the play, is not a fanatic and he understands America and Americans, which is not the case with our so-called dramatists of the proletariat. He writes with balance, with good temper, with humor, with understanding, and he knows that Communism and unrestricted industrialism are equally anathema to the average American.

He brings out his thesis by taking a small town New England druggist as the chief protagonist of his play. Jim Cogswell's son marries a Jewish girl, a radical, who stirs up the workmen in the town's factory, which is owned by Graham Hay, a schoolmate of Jim's. Jim does not approve of Hay's method of underpaying his men, and earns his dislike, but when he sees his daughter-in-law Ruth stirring up the workmen to violence he does not approve of that either, and though respecting her honesty he tells her that she and his son must leave his house. The strike breaks out and Jim is put in charge of the police. His son is killed in the riot, Ruth is left bereft of her husband and the strike fails. Jim, his son dead, starts his life where it had left off.

What is excellent in the play is Mr. Brewer's shrewd drawing of character, and notably of the character of Jim Cogswell. Jim is the small-town American to the life, practical, courageous, distrustful of general ideas, probably a rotarian, certainly a warm human being. That he should have been made a sort of town dictator in time of crisis is the weak point of the play. Mr. Brewer evidently put it in for the sake of a last act, and yet it is this very last act which seems trivial. After all, mere good-will is not enough to settle the problems of capital and labor, and though Mr. Brewer doesn't assert that Jim's intervention has made for lasting peace, this is the only solution the play provides.

Perhaps though we shouldn't ask for a solution in a play in which Grant Mitchell returns to Broadway in such a part as that of Jim. It fits him as perfectly as did that of "The Tailor Made Man," and makes us hope that he is back on the legitimate stage for good. Tamara gives a life-like portrait of the magnetic and dominant Ruth. Peggy O'Donnell is a typical small-town girl of the more attractive sort, Clyde Fillmore is admirable as Hay, and Frank McCormack gives a delightful bit as the apparently hard-boiled drug company agent. "Tide Rising" may not be perfect in its construction, there are too many unresolved bits, and the ending doesn't quite come off, but it is none the less a pleasing and human play, and one which deserves to succeed. (At the Lyceum Theatre.)

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Communications

"QUADRAGESIMO ANNO"

New York, N. Y.

TO the Editor: *Quandoque bonus dormitat Homerus.* When reading in THE COMMONWEAL of December 25 Monsignor Ryan's review of Father Von Nell-Breuning's book, I was surprised by the statement that in "Quadragesimo Anno," "the Holy Father is describing evil possibilities," and "that Father Coughlin's effort to show that the Pope regards concentration of wealth and credit as the main cause of our economic ills was futile. I know very little about economics and financial matters. I understand, however, the difference between a possibility and a reality. When I read a book, I am able to judge if the writer is expatiating on realities or possibilities. I always thought that the Holy Father in his encyclical, "Quadragesimo Anno," was describing evil realities. To prove to you that my conviction was well founded, I shall let other Doctors talk.

Father Von Nell-Breuning, S.J., writes: "Here, however, the object is to characterize a fault of the system which maims our modern capitalistic economy and for the removal of which we must strive."

Father Drinkwater in his book, "Money and Social Justice," writes: "All these ordinary human rights are being violated on the grandest possible scale by the existing financial system; that is (to use the Holy Father's phrase) by 'those who control credit and decide to whom it shall be allotted,' thereby dominating the whole economic side of life, permitting or vetoing this or that form of activity, sending prices up and down at will, and sooner or later bringing all forms of property and securities into their own clutches."

Father Albert Muller, S.J., professor at the Superior Institute of Commerce, Antwerp, Belgium, in his book, "Notes d'Economie Politique," quotes the passage 105-110 and then adds: "Such is capitalism, such is the revolution which its triumph has caused in our social organism. One does not wonder that exploited and oppressed humanity rebels against the crushing domination of capital and imperiously insists on the return of a better order in which matter will be subjected to the spirit and private interest subordinated to the common good."

For me, the authority of these writers is sufficient to be convinced that the Holy Father was describing not "evil possibilities," but evil realities.

Whether or not the Holy Father regards concentration of money and credit as the "main" cause of our economic ills, we shall never know. It is rather an idle question. This concentration is surely a serious cause. I think Father Coughlin did not insist so much on the adjective "main," as on the disastrous effectiveness of the cause in its depth and breadth. Even if it is true that Father Coughlin is guilty of the accusation, he is in good company.

Father Drinkwater has this to say: "Until the money-and-credit question is faced, it is not much use bothering about the prospects of anything else. Education, art, science, industry, family life—none of these things can be healthy with the financial system as it is. As the Pope sees it, then, the social question today is no longer a question between employers and employed. . . . Employers and employed, and unemployed, too, are now in the same boat, all helpless in the power of high finance. These are his words: 'It is obvious in our days that wealth and immense power have become concentrated in the hands of a few men. . . . This power becomes particularly irresistible. . . .'"

Since the scope of "Quadragesimo Anno" is "to vindicate the social and economic doctrine of so great a master (Leo XIII) against certain doubts which have arisen, and to develop more fully some of its points," whatever the commentators and social justice writers thought of the expression, concentration of wealth, commerce, industry and sources of supply in the hands of a few, as mentioned in "Rerum Novarum," can be logically applied to the same expression mentioned in "Quadragesimo Anno." I shall quote only two authorities: Ch. Antoine and Father Coulet.

Ch. Antoine in his book, "Cours d'économie sociale," writes thus: "I am concerned mainly with that movable capital whose two organs of concentration and circulation are the banks and the stock exchange [Haute Banque et la Bourse]. . . . Modern capitalism monopolizes production, wants to regulate it and dictates its will to the producers. . . . We witness a progressive encroachment by capital upon all economic functions. . . . Under the régime of modern capitalism, the direction of the economic life does not belong to the producers, . . . but rather to the unproductive capitalists, who subdue the former by their domination of the banks and the stock exchange. . . . The expansion of credit, the pooling of capital funds, the manipulation of the banks, secure to money an absolute domination. Mammon has become the king of nations."

"Do not accuse me," he writes, "of exaggeration. Whatever I have written about capitalism is only a mild and imperfect development of the energetic words of Leo XIII, who with masterly strokes has painted the picture of modern capitalism."

Some years ago, before the publication of "Quadragesimo Anno," Father Coulet published two little volumes, "L'église et le problème social" and "L'église et le problème economique." Both were prefaced by the late Cardinal Andrieu, of Bordeaux, and for both the author received the congratulations of Pope Benedict XV and Cardinal Gasparri. He denounces the financial system just like Father Coughlin, with less bitterness and vehemence, however. I shall translate a few lines:

". . . Our whole economic life is controlled, that is to say, dominated by the banks. . . . The money powers dominate the economic life of the whole world. . . . The limitless expansion of the big banks has absorbed and suppressed the small provincial banks and has thus deprived of the necessary credits a large number of small industrial, agricultural and commercial enterprises. . . . From every quarter we hear complaints concerning the insufficiency of credits granted by the big banks. . . . Large credits, however, are granted upon the recommendation of

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politicians to audacious swindlers. . . . Capital refused to French commerce and industry was advanced to foreign nations. . . . How many bankers endeavor to reserve for themselves . . . the financial control of our industries, to become the absolute masters of the market, to monopolize and restrict production. . . . We know well that all the grievances against high finance and the big bank are not unfounded. . . . Here we have the most serious and deepest wound in our modern world. . . . The money trade, the bank and the bourse are most foreign to the considerations of true justice, of charity, of the common interests and of true social prosperity. . . . It is the immorality of our financial system which contributes mainly to the fundamental immorality of our economic system. . . . Therein appears clearly the radical opposition between the doctrine of Christ and the doctrine of Mammon; between the reign of enduring peace and true prosperity and the brutal, egoistic and evil domination of the money powers."

Let me add an extract from an article published in the *Catholic Herald,* London, October 30, 1936. It will interest some of your readers.

"With this daily experience to guide us, therefore, we shall need more evidence than has as yet come our way to convince us that the condemnation of Father Coughlin's economics (as distinct from the circumstances of their propagation) is as weighty as it sounds. The pronouncement of so learned an economist as Monsignor Ryan carries more conviction, but though we do not doubt that Father Coughlin's teachings contain a considerable admixture of error, we confess that we are sceptical when Monsignor Ryan estimates it at 50 percent of the whole but 90 percent in monetary questions. For monetary questions more than any other are the blind spot for many otherwise open minds."

J. D.

THE ETERNAL ROAD

New York, N. Y.

TO the Editor: Having witnessed Morris Gest's "Miracle" several years ago, there came another disappointment in Max Reinhardt's "Eternal Road." Mr. Grenville Vernon's review of that spectacle says: "The play by Franz Werfel is frankly a disappointment." I left after the second act.

Bishop Gilmore's Bible History (with illustrations) was our daily study in the parochial school's final year, and imparted an appreciation for Old Testament scenes. We enjoyed seeing Jahel, the wife of Haber, drive a spike into Sisara's head, and felt sorry for his mother when weeping she looked through the lattice, and wondered why his chariot did not return. Judith holding the red dripping head of Holofernes was another favorite. Best of all were the history of Susanna (without Rembrandt's picture of herself and the elders) and the story of Esther. Both absent in the "Eternal Road." We were not told that the narrative of the chaste Susanna was considered by some Christians an addition to the Book of Daniel, and that the King James version of the Scriptures omitted also as apocryphal, a notable part of the Book of Esther, wherein she prays:

> I have heard that of old Thou didst take Israel
> From out all the nations,
> And our fathers from their predecessors:
> To bestow inheritance great and enduring.
> Thou hast been true to Thy promise.
> Remember Thy people in exile:
> Burdened by yoke of oppressors.
> Save Thy sceptre from strangers.
> Thou who art might above kingdoms,
> Hear the voices that hope in Thee.

Her song for deliverance was missing, as was Israel's voice of lament in Egypt, in a stirring chorus like Mendelssohn's: "By the rivers of Babylon we sat and wept, when we remembered Sion." The "Voice of God" was heard too often, and not effectively; and why a tenor?

Mr. Norman Bel Geddes is a master of staging and lighting; he does magical and weird effects with lamps, as in his Hamlet production, which the critics murdered. A dramatic moment was lost early in the pageant as the graceful figure holding light moved up the ascent under a glorious star-lit sky, to be greeted suddenly by the celestial choir framed like a big Easter card. That killed it. Again the death of Moses was an anti-climax, as on the heights of Phasga, he viewed with eyes of longing the Promised Land. He could have died with dignity. When dark death rushed out, I expected him to run furiously up the zig-zag ramp and shroud the lawgiver with the somber flowing mantle. No, Moses sauntered down to front stage, where both embraced in a movement which was not the dance of death, but to a tempo like La Giaconda's "Dance of the Hours." Earlier three heavenly messengers arrived at Abraham's tent with good news for Sarah; the two in streaming purple gyrated and flapped their arms like flamingos. Perhaps that's art in angels. While costuming Egyptians copiously, Mr. Geddes was skimpy garbing Israel in bondage. They wore no headgear of the Nile in what resembled a half section of a Y. M. C. A. tug of war. What a variety of hair cuts! And some heads showed "Stay-Comb." It was tiresome entertainment that Joseph provided impromptu, for his brethren in Egypt—we were spared Mrs. Potiphar —while Pharao did little better for the Family Circle in West 34th Street.

The synagogue recalled the confusion of Castle Garden fifty years ago. The humor was forced and flat, and in wretched taste with persecution beyond the threshold. The elder facing the lectern with his perpetual swaying was almost a dervish. The assemblage reading holy writ, or Josephus, and seeing in fancy their forefathers on the eternal road, were too observant of the performers.

Outside the "Giving of the Law," which would be improved with only the three bearers in evidence, there was lacking the sense of mystery of a miracle play. It did not grip. Its variety was not woven into unity; its spirituality was not convincing, though the theme was inseparable religion and race.

REV. PETER MORAN, C.S.P.

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Books

Unhappy Household

The Final Struggle: Countess Tolstoy's Diary from 1910. New York: Oxford University Press. $2.50.

THERE are such things as evil books, and there are painful books also, books which leave the reader with a bad taste in his mouth, and the regret he was induced to open and peruse them. This last volume on Tolstoy and his family life, his mental struggles, and his efforts to rise to a level he knew he could never reach, is both painful and evil, and one wonders how anyone near to him, and supposed to be dear to him, could ever bring himself or herself to publish it, and reveal to the world the details of the daily existence in the lunatic asylum which the Tolstoy house had become. Not one of those who lived in it was sane, not one was disinterested, and with the exception of the unfortunate Countess Tolstoy, not one among them possessed this indispensable thing called a heart.

The book is what I may call a work for exportation, because it aims to make out of Tolstoy something quite extraordinary, and to keep in the dark the fact that toward the end of his life, he had become a senile old man fallen into the hands of a few unscrupulous people like the famous Chertkov, who wanted to build for himself a reputation at the expense of Tolstoy, and whose real character is not known abroad, while most of those who knew him well in Russia have already passed into the great beyond.

But apart from Chertkov, and his influence over Tolstoy, there were other things in the family life of the latter it would have been far better to have allowed to remain forgotten. There are episodes which do not bear repetition, and the real meaning of which had evidently not been realized by the editors of this perfectly atrocious book. For instance, the one described on page 177, where is quoted a passage out of the diary of Countess Tolstoy, and its confirmation in a letter from another of Tolstoy's disciples, Goldenweiser, which relates how Alexandra Lvovna Tolstoy, seeing her mother weep, spat in her face, saying as she did so, "How tired I am of this comedy!" A daughter spitting in her mother's face is so revolting that one is amazed at the effrontery of those who did not hesitate to make such an incident public.

Of course Countess Tolstoy was not normal, but was this not because she had been almost driven into insanity by the conduct of her children, and the way they had sided against her, and done their best to provoke a breach between her and her husband? The unfortunate woman was the victim of a situation which she had not created; and besides, how could she remain sane amidst the lunatics by whom she was surrounded?

I repeat, this is an evil book, which certainly will do no good to the memory of a man who undoubtedly was a great writer; but who was nevertheless a most heartless individual.

CATHERINE RADZIWILL.

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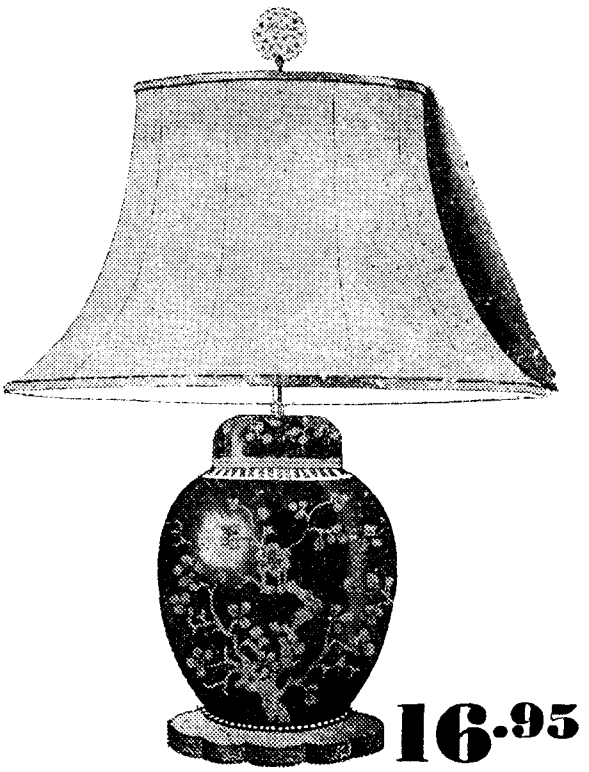

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Next Week

Father Parsons continues his remarks on POPULAR FRONT AND CATHOLICISM. He goes on to detail explicitly for America what he feels is the "tremendous responsibility" placed on Catholics. "It is probably the first time in our history that the interests of the country and of our Church have been idenified on so grave an issue. We must establish before the country that the interests of our country and the salvation of the world lie on a third position, shared by neither Communism nor Fascism, and that is the defense of democracy and peace." . . . Attacking somewhat the same problem in a different way, Louis Minsky, assistant editor of the excellent News Service of the National Conference of Jews and Christians, contributes RELIGION AND THE "UNITED FRONT." Mr. Minsky traces the problem to "the question as to whether religious agencies should cooperate with secular bodies at all." But this does not in the least imply that religionists should abstain from social action. "The need is for a powerful religious social movement, a movement which, in the process of converting society, will convert individuals in it to the religious way of life." . . . HUMANIZING THE BRUTE, by Joseph H. Fichter, gives a rosier picture of the future of industrial relations than is usual. Industrial democracy and cooperatives are seen as giving hope that at some time profits may be subordinated to welfare. The corner around which is the democratic control of wealth should no longer be considered, according to the author, around as many corners as people are often tempted to believe it. . . . ALMOST THE WHOLE DUTY, by John Abbot Clark, deals with literary criticism in America during the past generation and up to the present. Attempting to force no highbrow or lowbrow attitude, no optimism or pessimism, Mr. Clark looks over he writers and critics and writings. There is no doubt that he finds a moving and vital section of American life, and a section from which feathers inevitably are usually flying.

Growth of the Faith

Catholicism in New England to 1788, by the Rev. Arthur J. Riley. Washington, D. C.: Catholic University of America.

OF Catholicism in New England, there was none until after the American Revolution, and then there were only a few individuals who were known to be Catholics. Of an organized Church, there was nothing until about the year which closes this study. In 1775, John Adams could observe that "a native who cannot read and write is as rare an appearance as a Jacobite or a Roman Catholic, that is as rare as a comet or earthquake." However, Father Riley has written a lengthy dissertation on Catholicism in colonial New England for his doctorate in history at the Catholic University of America. It is really a fundamental study of the New England Puritan-Congregationalist attitude toward the Catholic Church as described by the learned divines in press and pulpit. And the study is more than a dissertation; for happily, after the award of his degree, the author had several months in which to mull over his information, reorganize his material and mature his interpretation with the result that he has produced a sound book which is characterized by historical and philosophical learning, commendable detachment and a sympathetic understanding.

This study is readable, although it is painstakingly footnoted and grounded upon a tremendous amount of source and secondary material: sermons, almanacs, catechisms, school-books, theological treatises, provincial writings, anti-Catholic works (especially those of the ex-priest, Antonio Gavin), legislative enactments, state and local histories and monographs. There are a considerable number of references to respectable studies by Catholic students, let one add for the benefit of those Catholics who sadly complain that there are virtually no Catholic scholars, whereas a score of years ago Father Riley would have found little such guidance save in the official "History of the Catholic Church in New England" (1899).

The thesis is essentially the development of the Puritan mind toward Catholicism. Puritanism as a creed may be dying—and it was a bulwark against greater evils—but the Puritan mind lives. And in that mind there was a dread of popery and prelacy, a hatred of recusant and of Laudian conformity, a fear of France and Spain, a horror of Jesuit and Jacobite, hopeful anticipation of the fall of Babylon, suspicion of Catholic loyalty, and aversion for the Irish people, even those immigrants whose religious allegiance was to the synod of Ulster. This is well developed in a consideration of the English background the literature which men read, the sermons which they heard, the school-books from which they were taught and the prejudiced historical tales from the Sicilian Vespers to the Papish Plot with which they were regaled. Then for a century and a half, New Englanders were never secure from attack by the French and Indians, and the French were Catholics. There were New England captives in Canada, and some of these became perverts from Puritanism. Catholicism became associated with the

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enemy and with disloyalty. Penal laws had this in mind quite as much as stamping out recusancy. With the end of the French and Jacobin menace, with the translation of religious into political independency during the Revolution and with an opportunism born of the French alliance, there was a gradual modification of the historic hostility to "Romanism." In time there was toleration, and ultimately religious freedom—save for the retention of a few citadels. This is Father Riley's story.

RICHARD J. PURCELL.

Problems of Peace

Is It Peace?, by Graham Hutton. New York: The Macmillan Company. $2.50.

THIS book is basically an attack upon the weakness of British foreign policy since the World War, written by an Englishman who would like to see his mother country exercise world leadership, while remaining a democracy. At the same time it is a kaleidoscopic survey of conflicts of diplomatic policy, primarily in Central Europe, but also in the Far East and in colonial interests. Only superficial attention is paid to the United States as an isolationist power; and the countries of South America are ignored, except with reference to the Monroe Doctrine. Each chapter of the second part presents some aspect of the problem of peace, as a closed and separate unit of the whole, as factors which must be considered in the solution: the relation of France and Germany; the rôles of Poland and Russia in Eastern Europe; the importance attached by Italy to the future of Austria and of Spain; the effect of the growing autonomy of the dominions on British foreign and defense policies; the failure of attempts at disarmament; each of these from the point of view described above. There is, for example, repeated regret expressed over Great Britain's failure to ratify the Geneva Protocol of 1924, or to use sanctions vigorously in 1931 and in 1934. Without more careful examination of alternatives than is given here, this regret amounts to little more than an expression of hurt pride or wishful thinking.

Any work covering so many diplomatic forces in so few pages must lay itself open to charges of generalization, since details cannot be discussed. Though written for the average reader, the book presupposes a wide knowledge of detail—a knowledge which may possibly exist in the British reading public. In spite of a vivid and concise style, the method of unit treatment further leads to certain repetitiousness, not only as to events (such as the conclusion of the Locarno Pact), but also as to dates and catch-phrases (such as "a Carthaginian Peace," or "London in ruins"); altogether these produce the effect of sketchy writing and of hurried publication of a book of but transient value. This effect is heightened by some obvious blind spots in the author's point of view, such as the identification of democratic government with the party now in power in Spain; the unquestioning acceptance of ecclesiastical land ownership there; the indictment of the Vatican as supporting the reactionary Spanish Right-wing, without any examination of the encyclical, "Dilectissima

LACK OF RESPECT

It is one of the oddities of Catholic life that even good currents should have to be swum against. *THE IMITATION OF CHRIST* is a jewel: but it gave rise to a whole host of Imitations of the Imitation: there came to be a fashion of pessimism: until St. Francis de Sales came to pivot the spiritual life on love rather than on humility: with the result that he was accused of lack of respect for God. Michael Muller in *ST. FRANCIS DE SALES* ($2.25), gives us a portrait of the saint and an account of that spiritual teaching which makes him so valuable in our own inert day: for inertia can only be cured by vitality, and love is more vitalising than humility.

If a saint's-life-writer of the pre-Gheon era should chance upon Father Steuart, S. J.'s *DIVERSITY IN HOLINESS* ($2.00), he would certainly accuse the author of lack of respect for the saints: because there was then a fashion of writing of saints in a hushed falsetto. In this series of studies of saints-as-diverse-as-possible, Fr. Steuart is confessedly considering the saints without their halo; but, if you see aright, a saint without his halo is like a man without his hat: he is easier to talk to, and it is surprising how lively a companion a saint can be provided his biographer does not act the nursery governess.

Readers of Robert Farren's book of poems, *THRONGING FEET* ($1.25), will probably accuse him of lack of respect for Francis Thompson: who looks like becoming another of those good customs that corrupt the Catholic world. Not that Farren criticises Thompson; but Thompson having shown once and for all the only way in which a Catholic can possibly write poetry, it is a plain impertinence for a young man to write very fine poems of another sort. His excuse must be that he is an Irishman and that his ear has not purged itself of the lovely cadences of Gaelic poetry or his mind of the austerity of Gaelic spirituality.

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Nobis," or any search for the possible reason underlying Catholic suspicion of the government in power; and the not quite wholly consistent alignment of Russia with democratic countries.

As might be expected from the point of view, no solution for British policy is accepted here. Three alternatives are sketched, none of them satisfactory to the author. No real explanation for British wavering is given, unless it be the age of British parliamentary leaders. The author ends with a hope that his nation will, for the time being, make no more commitments on the Continent, which he admits to be itself a weak piece of advice. All in all, the book presents forcibly, and without comfort, the muddled bewilderment of the British public.

ELIZABETH M. LYNSKEY.

Portrait of an Artist

My Father Paul Gauguin, by Pola Gauguin; translated by Arthur G. Chater. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. $3.75.

FORTUNAT STROWSKI, the French *homme de lettres,* avows that the only reality is the theatre, and the only unreality is life. What is vital today is not what we do in our hours of activity but the way we live in our imaginations.

Paul Gauguin's ambition was to restore the myth to reality. His son Pola's desire is to restore reality to the myth of his father—the fantastic Gauguin legend of how a boy became a sailor, the sailor a man, the man a banker, the banker a stockbroker, the stockbroker an artist.

Born in Paris in 1848, of an Orleans father and a Peruvian mother, Gauguin hated the narrow limits Christian society (in the broad sense) set for what it called the normal, and yet he was constantly haunted by the longing for his family which made him bitterly aware of his position, and later his lack of position, in society.

The son does well by a father he never knew very personally, for he tells a straightforward story of a man "powerful and healthy, trained in bodily exercise . . . a good fencer and boxer . . . excellent swimmer . . . well built, broad shouldered, narrow in the hips . . . hands and feet small but strong . . . mouth dominant . . . pale green eyes, deep set under straight brows . . . complexion a uniform cool brown with a greenish tinge in the shadows"—and how, in later years, that same physical, emotional, intellectual creature became almost unrecognizable to his family, abandoned it completely, went native in Tahiti and died there because his uncompromising uprightness chose to fail in the duty he felt he owed his family, rather than be false to himself. He loved his capable Norwegian wife, laid no restraint on her freedom which, to her, was one of the most essential good things of life and made her, at all times, bear with him as a man she once loved, always respected and never understood. He adored his five children as a self-admitted part of his ego, but was willing to sacrifice them all on the altar of an ambition—to make something of his existence.

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Glimpses of contemporary artists and his relation to them, especially Van Gogh, post-Impressionism, life in the South Seas, influences at work in his development, all contribute to very meaty reading. Decidedly different from his own intimate journals, "My Father Paul Gauguin" is a faithful son's sincere and successful attempt to reveal the man inside the monster and to justify both in the light of their composite achievement.

MARY KNIGHT.

Galileo Investigated

Aristotle, Galileo and the Tower of Pisa, by Lane Cooper. Ithaca: Cornell University Press. $1.50.

STUDENTS of science and the history of thought are indebted to the professor of the English Language and Literature in Cornell University. The present small volume is an account of his critical study of the documents pertaining to the famous story of Galileo's public demonstration of Aristotle's allegedly erroneous views on motion by dropping two different weights from the Leaning Tower of Pisa.

Professor Cooper has examined all the extant works of Galileo and his contemporaries at Pisa, and he finds no reference to an experiment performed from the tower. And where there is no evidence that Galileo did perform the experiment, there is some evidence that he did not. The discovery ascribed to Galileo that the acceleration of a freely falling body is independent of its weight had been experimentally verified by Simon Stevin and others anterior to Galileo. Moreover, there is no evidence that Aristotle held the views which Galileo attributed to him.

But many of us are quite used to Galileo-myths by now. There is the famous remark, "E pur si muove," which he is supposed to have mumbled after his recantation. This story is a pure fiction, yet it is still believed, and used as a rallying call in some quarters. Unfortunately the remark has been used as a motto for the Home University Library series.

To this reviewer, however, the real significance of Galileo's contribution to the problem of motion is associated with his inclined-plane experiment, his concept of the ideal motion as a constant velocity in the horizontal direction and his recognition that the forced motion of a projectile is compounded of an ideal motion and a natural (freely falling) motion, each of which can be treated independently as if the other did not act. It was through these contributions that Galileo effected a greater generalization and reconciliation, if not a correction, of the forced and natural motions of Aristotle. In view of all this, the present reviewer cannot subscribe to Professor Cooper's estimate of Galileo's work as "amateurish" compared with the work of Archimedes on hydrostatics.

A non-scientist who had the prudence to obtain the counsel of his colleague, the eminent physicist, Professor Richtmyer, Professor Cooper has given us a scholarly and valuable work, deserving of the honor of being "the first book to be formally accepted by the Council of the Cornell University Press for publication."

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Popularizing Art

Fashions in Art, by Huger Elliott. New York: D. Appleton-Century Company. $3.50.

THE DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION of the Metropolitan Museum of Art has rewritten a group of radio talks, illustrated them, and given them for more leisurely perusal. Mr. Elliott insists on one's right to know what one likes, but through the anecdotes and descriptions and explanations it is almost impossible not to pick up a few sound canons of taste—if not of esthetics. He wants one to be aware of the circumstances and purpose of the artist, and the artist of the connection between the material, instruments and function of his work and its looks. The chapters are very introductory sketches to any number of different art forms and periods and artists. Most interestingly, there are numerous clear explanations of methods, such as casting bronze, producing pottery, making stained-glass windows, etc. It is surprising to be able to tell so easily that the chapters have gone out over the air, and I think it is possible to tell which radio talks received most revision. It is a somewhat new form of expression. One requirement, apparently, is that each few pages must absolutely have some colorful, "interesting" element which can be taken up by anyone, as definite in art writing as an O. Henry ending is in a story. It is an elementary book, but it gives with charm a pleasant cultural atmosphere and should easily and amiably stimulate a broad and appreciative interest in all forms of art and artifact, and should certainly keep anyone from being bored in a museum.

Story of a Nurse

I Was a Probationer, by Corinne Johnson Kern. New York: E. P. Dutton and Company. $2.50.

A RATHER hard-boiled story of life as a nurse, with an eye for facts that are facts, Mrs. Kern's book rings true. The plot isn't much to boast of, but the conversation is real and the medical atmosphere is—well, breathable though by no means air-conditioned.

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